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King: Jordan anxious for progress in all tracks

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein has said that Jordan, although it is preoccupied with its track of negotiations with Israel, remains anxious to see progress on the Syrian and Lebanese peace talks with the Jewish state.

The King also expressed hope that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat will visit the autonomous territories of Jericho and Gaza Strip "as soon as possible."

"I hope that he does that," the King said in an interview with Cable News Network (CNN) broadcast Friday evening.

The King, who on Thursday concluded a visit to the U.S. after talks with Presi-

dent Bill Clinton and other administration officials, said he believed that Mr. Clinton was very interested in seeking progress in the Israeli-Jordanian track and also in seeking a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East.

"As far as we are concerned we are just about to embark on the real work," the King said of the upcoming Israeli-Jordanian negotiations on borders and water rights. "That requires the best of us on both sides to resolve all the problems."

The negotiations are "not tied to anything that happens elsewhere," said the King in reference to the other tracks in the peace talks. "But we are very anxious to see all move and are interested to see a comprehensive peace.

"So now, we are focusing on our problems and we are going to address these problems with all the attention they require. I do not know how long it will take the Syrians to undertake us before we complete our task, but, nonetheless, we are optimistic and hopeful."

"I hope that we will come together at a point in the future," the King said.

The King said a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was not a "taboo subject," but that any such encounter depends on the progress in the negotiations. "I think that a public meeting is very feasible," he said, "and it will not take long before it happens. But we want to see the development of negotiations."

In reply to a question on opposition expressed by Islamic political groups in the country to the peace process, the King said: "I think peace is (inevitably coming). The process is irreversible and regardless of how we view matters in Jordan from different perspectives I think there is a great deal of realism here."

Asked whether he expected a vast majority of Jordanians to support the peace process, the King said: "It all depends on how it works on many points. Obviously it is not peace at any price. It is the kind of peace that future generations can live with, cherish and protect."

The King said the secondary and tertiary Arab trade boycott of Israel were "things of the past" but that Jordan was suffering an Israeli boycott. It was a reference to Israeli restrictions on Jordanian exports to the Palestinian territories in the occupied territories.

"They are protecting their industries against our ... an agreement has to be negotiated and resolved," the King said.

In reply to a question, the King declined direct comment on how he viewed the ability of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Arafat to rule democratically and with respect for human rights.

"It is something I cannot comment. I hope he is up to it. I have encouraged the Palestinians to stick together, to express themselves

through unity, and I am sure that there are many challenges in the future, mainly among them the need of the Palestinian people for democracy, pluralism, respect for human rights and need for Arafat to be the symbol and the leader, but at the same time for institutions to come up to enhance the credibility that is required ... and for him to go back as soon as possible."

"I really hope that he will live up to the expectations of the Palestinian people, and he has our full support and full backing," the King said.

In another interview with Radio Monte Carlo, King Hussein voiced hope that serious Jordanian-Israeli negotiations could be launched next month to address all

items on the Jordanian-Israeli agenda approved in Washington.

The American role in the Middle East peace process, King Hussein said, is that of a sponsor of the peace process and an important one and had led the Arab-Israeli talks to an advanced stage.

On his talks with U.S. President Clinton and senior U.S. officials, King Hussein said he felt that senior U.S. officials had shown great understanding of Jordan's present and future needs, particularly in the economic field.

The King said he discussed with President Clinton bilateral relations, the peace process and the U.S. role in

(Continued on page 12)



North tightens pressure on Aden

Combined agency dispatches

FOURTEEN civilians were killed and 42 people wounded Friday as northern Yemeni troops bombarded Aden for a ninth day without letup, hospital officials said.

Southern authorities added that 376 civilians had been killed and 861 wounded in the city and governorate of Aden since June 11.

Katynsha rockets slammed into the districts of Kharmak-sar close to Aden airport, Maala near the port and into a market at Sheikh Osman in the northern suburbs.

A total of 14 people were killed and 42 wounded, officials at the Al Jumhuriya Hospital said.

Families arrived at the hospital to collect for burial the bodies of those killed Thursday and Friday, and vans carrying wooden coffins left every hour for the city's mosques.

In fierce fighting on the northwest front at Bir Ahmad, 15 kilometers from Aden, four soldiers were wounded, hospital officials added.

Northern troops, who have kept up rocket and artillery fire on the southern stronghold since June 16, advanced overnight into the town of Bir Ahmad after seizing the entrance oo

Thursday.

Fighting had died down earlier Friday but southern troops were massing armored cars to launch a counter-offensive against their northern rivals loyal to President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

At least 123 civilians have now been killed and about 410 wounded since the north unleashed its assault on the city on June 16, according to a toll by hospital officials.

Thirty people, mostly civilians, were killed and close to 150 wounded on Thursday as rocket and artillery fire rained on the city in the fiercest day of shelling so far.

In Aden residents still have to queue up at 72 wells for water, even though southern authorities have managed to reconnect supplies from the main pumping station at Bir Nasser, close to the northern front, hit by northern fire several days ago.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) officials said water supplies were "vulnerable" in contamination.

Both the ICRC and a spokesman for Medecins Sans Frontieres said there were no signs of any epidemics breaking out in the city.

King, Queen in London after successful U.S. visit Washington pledges debt relief

Combined agency dispatches

THEIR MAJESTIES King Hussein and Queen Noor have arrived in London after concluding a highly successful visit to the United States where the King held talks with President Bill Clinton on Middle East issues and Jordanian-American relations.

The King and Queen were accompanied to London by Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and the King's military secretary, His Royal Highness Prince Talal Ben Mohammad.

Summing up the King's talks with the U.S. administration, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali said in a statement to Petra that the talks helped improve ties and would lead to a concrete development in bilateral relations in all fields.

The King's visit, Dr. Majali said, laid the foundation for a "new and strong relationship with the United States, especially with regard to the Middle East peace process."

"King Hussein's talks have placed matters in their proper perspective with regard to Jordan's economy and its vision of peace," Dr. Majali said.

Dr. Majali left Washington for Los Angeles to deliver a lecture on the developments in the Middle East region and the outcome of King Hussein's visit to the United States.

Information Minister Jawad Al Anani said the United States had told Jordan it will consider cancelling debts of \$951 million and help ease the country's repayments to the Paris Club of creditor nations.

Dr. Anani, quoted by the Jordan news agency, Petra, said the United States "gave Jordan a firm pledge it would consider cancelling Jordan's debts."

Dr. Anani accompanied King Hussein on the visit to Washington.

The United States also "pledged to help Jordan obtain a reduction in its debts to the creditor nations of the Paris Club," Dr. Anani said.

The Paris Club is due to meet in Paris Monday and Tuesday to consider rescheduling Jordan's debts.

Jordan's external debt is put at \$6.6 billion.

Dr. Anani said a reduction in Jordan's debts was the main issue discussed at the first meeting of the Joint U.S.-Jordanian commission in Washington Wednesday.

U.S. officials said Thursday that the United States was prepared to forgive Jordan's debt if Amman helps advance the peace process with Israel.

President Clinton told reporters before meeting King Hussein on Wednesday that peace in the Middle East,

seizin's visit to the United States.

particularly between Israel and Syria, remained "a very important priority" for his administration.

The State Department said the United States will support efforts to reschedule Jordan's public debt when the Paris Club meets next.

On the question of debt relief, Mr. McCurry said: "We will be as supportive as possible when the Paris Club takes up rescheduling Jordan's public debt in the near future."

Asked if future U.S. economic and military assistance to Jordan depends on a peace agreement with Israel, the spokesman replied: "I don't want to speculate about conditions. I think there are good reasons to promote this type of economic renewal, but it certainly is in the context of what we see as a hopeful environment in the Israeli-Jordanian discussions."

U.S. officials said Thursday the United States is prepared to forgive Jordan's \$700 million military debt if the kingdom helps advance the peace process with Israel.

The officials, who declined to be identified, spoke a day after the U.S. administration said President Clinton was ready to host peace talks here between King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Israelis kill Nablus boy

NABLUS, Occupied West Bank (AP) — Israeli troops quelling a demonstration demanding prisoner releases in this still-occupied city shot and killed a youth Friday, Palestinian reports said.

Clashes with troops erupted around 9 a.m. when scores of youths took to the streets, chanting to demand the release of all Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails.

The town was shut by a commercial strike and the youths ignited tyres at many intersections.

Azzam Manasrah, 18, of Beit Furik village outside Nablus, was shot in the chest during the downtown clashes. He died soon after arrival at Anglican Hospital, Palestinian reporters said.

The army spokesman's office said it was checking the report.

Clashes were also reported in Hebron between youths throwing stones and the army.

The agreement to release prisoners under certain conditions, contained in the agreement for Palestinian self-rule signed May 4, is proving an explosive issue in the parts of the West Bank still under occupation.

The agreement stipulates that prisoners turned over to the Palestinian National Authority to finish their sentences in the autonomous areas of Gaza or Jericho. The Palestinians said that should only cover rapists, drug dealers and other criminals, but

Israel sees it covering those given life sentences for killing suspected collaborators.

While it is not considered a problem for the prisoners from Gaza, about 280 from the West Bank were sent to Jericho and want to return home. Israel has also said it will not release prisoners with Israeli blood on their hands or those from faction opposed to the peace process.

Palestinians want all prisoners released, regardless of faction. PLO leader Yasser Arafat announced Thursday he would not come to autonomy areas until all prisoners were released.

Meanwhile, Israeli and

(Continued on page 12)

PLO: Israel delaying Arafat

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat's visit to the self-rule area of Jericho is being delayed by Israeli violations of an interim peace deal, PLO officials said on Friday.

"It is very difficult for Abu Ammar (Arafat) to come as long as Israel continues to violate the agreement," PLO chief negotiator Nabil Shaath told Reuters.

A PLO official who refused to be named said he did not expect Mr. Arafat to make the long-awaited trip to Jericho before the first week of July.

And Faisal Al Hussein, the leading local PLO official in the West Bank, put Mr. Arafat's position bluntly to

Israel Radio: "Yasser Arafat cannot come under existing conditions."

Dr. Shaath said Israel was "politically motivated" in throwing up obstacles to the visit. He said he would meet Israeli officials on Monday to try and resolve the problems.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's spokesman Oded Ben-Ami did not discuss specifics but told Reuters: "Israel has no motives because it was not violating the accord."

Dr. Shaath said the political problems were in addition to snags in obtaining funds from international donors that also delayed Mr. Arafat's return. He said release of Palestinian prisoners and access to Jerusalem were also problems.

Among things provided in the peace deal but not done were the stationing of 400 international observers in Gaza and Jericho, the provision of a "safe passage" through Israel connecting Gaza and Jericho, free movement of PLO officials and stationing of Palestinian police at border crossings, he said.

Another PLO official said Mr. Arafat had told Israel he would not come to Jericho before the Israeli army reduced its presence in the densely-populated areas in the rest of the West Bank, which he said was also called for in the interim peace deal.

Dr. Shaath said in particular Israel's barring him earlier

(Continued on page 12)

Syria rejects Israeli call, scoffs at Rabin

DAMASCUS (Agencies) —

Syria on Friday rejected a new Israeli peace proposal linking any withdrawal from the Golan Heights to sealing security arrangements and a peace treaty between the two states.

Government-controlled newspapers also said that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's warning that war might break out in the absence of a peace settlement with Syria was designed to pressure Damascus into a compromise.

"Such threats will only push Syria to stick more and more to its rights," said the daily Al Baath, mouthpiece of President Hafez Al Assad's ruling Arab Baath Socialist Party.

"Israeli rulers should realise that threats of aggression will not intimidate Syria or make it give up its drive for a just and comprehensive peace," it said.

Syria has insisted on Israeli commitment to a total withdrawal from the Golan Heights under a land-for-peace deal.

"Whoever wants to say he wants all the Golan Heights back to prepare for war, three, five years or seven years from now," Mr. Rabin said in a speech Thursday.

His foreign minister, Shimon Peres, earlier told Jewish fundraisers that "Israel has proposed several interesting proposals to the Syrians

and if there is a response on its part, there could be a breakthrough in negotiations."

Mr. Peres said the settlement offered "has three parallel chapters, intertwined, about security, peace and withdrawal."

He also urged Syria to agree to direct high-level talks rather than working only through U.S. mediation, including secret contacts "away from the eye of the media."

"Syria refuses Israeli proposals which talk about security arrangements before withdrawal, because if this happens, Israel will get both peace and land at the same time," Al Baath said of Mr. Peres' statement.

Peace talks with Syria have been stalled since February, when a Jewish settler massacred more than 30 Palestinian worshippers in a mosque in Hebron.

Another government daily, Al Thawra, said Israel was trying to block a new Mideast trip by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. It did not explain how.

But the newspaper said such moves were a "flagrant attempt by Israel to clear itself of responsibility for the current deadlock in the peace process."

The Israeli media had reported that Mr. Christopher would return to the Mideast beginning July 10.

Barbed wires and the changed lines in sand

This is the first in a series of reports containing the writer's impressions during a familiarisation trip through southern and northern Jordan organised by the Ministry of Information and the Armed Forces in close proximity to the occupied Jordanian lands that are expected to be negotiated in talks with Israel next month.

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The glint across the desert sun that came from the binoculars of an Israeli soldier and the barbed wire fence that stretched as far as the eye could see came as a chilling reminder that we were on a "ceasefire lull" oodler watchful Israeli eyes.

"That's Jordanian land," said a Jordanian army officer, pointing to the vastness across the fence as we, a group of representatives from the local media, gathered around him. "In some places they have come in as much as eight kilometres into Jordanian territory."

Those were the key words that rang out through a 10-hour trek through the banks of the Dead Sea and down the Ghor Safi-Aqaba Road with forays into the Wadi Araba desert along the Jordanian-Israeli ceasefire

line that has moved frequently into the Kingdom's land since 1948.

The trip, the first of its kind, came as a familiarisation trip to the local media as Jordan prepares for the start of key negotiations with Israel next month on border demarcation and water rights.

"The Jordanians should know what we are going to discuss and the scope of the issues involved," and hence the trip organised by the Ministry of Information and the Armed Forces, explained Munther Haddadin, one of Jordan's key negotiators with Israel.

"There cannot be any dispute over where Jordanian land begins and ends since the terms of reference for the negotiations are the 1928 maps of the British mandate of Palestine," added Brigadier General Mansour Ben Rashid.

Those maps clearly show the Jordanian boundaries before the state of Israel was carved out of Palesti-

nian land in 1948. The only problem had been that Israel never respected those lines in 1948, grabbing Jordanian land then and in the years since then.

In the bilateral talks that were launched with the peace process in Madrid in September 1991, Israel had steadfastly avoided pointed Jordanian efforts to start talks on the border and water issues.

"It is indeed an achievement for Jordan to get Israel to agree to demarcate the border and discuss water rights," said Dr. Haddadin, the Kingdom's top water expert.

"It is an acknowledgment that the present 'borders' are not the right borders and the issue could be discussed," added Dr. Haddadin.

Dr. Haddadin, one of the Jordanian delegates who attended the Jordanian-Israeli meeting under the auspices of the U.S. in Washington early this month that produced the Israeli agreement, has no doubts that Jordan would be able to secure its rights in the negotiations.

No East Bank territory was seized in the 1967 war,

and hence the operating paragraphs of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 do not apply to the occupied East Bank land. However, Israel has agreed to accept the preamble of the resolution as acceptable.

But again, Israel has resisted describing the land as Jordanian. A compromise was "negotiations on border and territorial matters" in the agreement that was reached in Washington.

In essence, an Israeli agreement to delineate the borders means pulling back the wire fence that splits the Jordan Valley and placing them on the delineation lines as given in the 1928 British mandate maps. As the army officer noted, the Israeli encroachment into Jordanian land is at places up to eight kilometres and at others an average of two to three kilometres.

According to Jordanian maps, drawn up on the basis of the borders set by the British mandate of Palestine, Israel now occupies 380 square kilometres of Jordanian land in the south, beginning at the

An Israeli patrol jeep parked near a water well in occupied Jordanian land in Wadi Araba (photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)

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Report on Israeli abuse of rights challenges U.S.

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A recent report of continued grave human rights violations by Israel against Palestinians will be a test of U.S. human rights policies in this region.

The 316-page report published by Human Rights Watch is based on interviews conducted with 36 Palestinians detained and interrogated since June 1992, including 10 held after signing of the September 1993 Israeli-Palestinian declaration of principles. It is also based on courtroom testimony of the General Security Services (GSS) agents and interviews with defence lawyers and four Israeli soldiers.

The report charges that the two interrogating agencies in Israel, the GSS (also known as Shin Bet or Shabak) and the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) "systematically and severely abuse Palestinians who are being held for interrogation."

The report states that over 100,000 Palestinians had been detained since the start of the intifada in December 1987. The detainees are held in IDF or GSS interrogating facilities throughout the occupied territories. Although the methods of the two agencies differ, the end result is the same — to force the detainees into providing information or to coerce him or her into signing a confession.

Israel, the largest beneficiary of U.S. aid, receives over

\$3 billion annually in economic and security assistance. Of that amount, the report notes, \$1.8 billion goes to one of Israel's interrogating agencies, the army.

U.S. foreign aid policies are closely tied to the human rights records of the beneficiary country. The Foreign Assistance Act prohibits the U.S. government from providing any military or economic aid to a country that has a bad human rights record.

"I really think it's unrealistic to expect to see any fundamental change in the security relations between Israel and the U.S.," said Holly Burkhalter, the advocacy director for human rights watch in Washington D.C., in a telephone interview with the Jordan Times.

Ms. Burkhalter said she had no expectations that the findings of the group would make any difference in the American Congress. "There are some of them don't want to give Israel a blank check, but there is no majority to sustain (any change in policy)."

Despite continuous reports by international human rights organisations concerning Israeli treatment of the Palestinians, little if nothing has been done to address the problem.

For example, Palestinian detainees are denied their basic rights under internationally recognised covenants for human rights. At the time of their arrest, all 36 ex-detainees interviewed by the New York-based Human

Rights Watch stated that the arresting authorities did not inform them of their offence, where they were being taken to, or which security agency was arresting them. Some even feared being deported to Lebanon.

The detainees were subjected to rigid psychological and physical pressures that lasted for days, weeks and sometimes months. They were denied visits by their relatives, friends and most importantly legal counsel.

Under international law, detainees have certain rights that would guarantee them a fair trial, among those is the right to be "brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorised by law to exercise judicial power."

According to the report, a large number of detainees were held incommunicado for at least 18 days before being brought in front of a judge.

"It's not surprising to see human rights issues being used to serve U.S. political interests," said Asma Khader, executive member of Amnesty International, and the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists.

Ms. Khader said that human rights issues are used by the U.S. government at times to obtain certain political objectives. "If the U.S. government wants to see real peace in the region, then there should be a radical change in its policies towards Israel and the Palestinians," she said.

Barbed wire and changed lines

(Continued from page 1)

southern tip of the Dead Sea. Another 820 dunums (0.82 square kilometres) are in the north.

Jordan's boundaries with the Palestinians — the West Bank — are no concern of Israel, said Gen. Ben Rashid, the Jordanian delegate to the armistice commission which groups Jordan, the United Nations and Israel.

Only a few kilometres halfway down south from the Dead Sea along the wire fence are exceptions to the Israeli infringement into Jordanian territory, said the army officer, pointing to an area in the map where the actual armistice line is respected, perhaps because the area is too thin for encroachment.

The tour began, literally, in the middle of the Dead Sea, which has been sepa-

rated into units with earthen banks to facilitate the extraction process of the Arab Potash Company.

As the bus laboured along the mudtracks on the banks of the so-called salt pans of the Arab Potash Company, Israeli trucks could be seen at work less than 100 metres to the west. They belonged to the Israeli company extracting potash and other minerals from the Dead Sea (the mandate line runs hypothetically in the middle of the Dead Sea, marked by a large white cement marker placed there by the British mandate authorities).

Further down southwest, Israeli hotels and health spas — much larger in size compared to their Jordanian counterparts up north — could be seen on the banks of the Dead Sea.

Unlike its frenzy to change the demography of

the West Bank, Israel has not set up settlements in the occupied East Bank land. Instead, it has encouraged seasonal farming there, given the richness of the land, which lies down the mountains and gets an abundant supply of underground water.

Israelis have dug many wells in the region, army officers said, citing the actual Arabic as well as the Israeli-given names of the areas.

As the media group budied around a huge military map of the area spread on a Humvee vehicle, an Israeli patrol stopped across the fence and looked on curiously but kept a respectful distance. From that point, Israeli border patrols followed us — handing us over from point to point — on the other side of the fence to a large part of the rest of the tour.

Beilin comments on Israel on its feet spark uproar

TEL AVIV (AP) — Yossi Beilin, Israel's deputy foreign minister, has shocked the old guard by saying Israel no longer needed knee-jerk political support and was too wealthy for handouts from abroad.

On Wednesday, he proposed sweeping reforms — replacing the agency long in charge of immigration, turning Israel bonds into a mutual fund and offering a round-trip plane ticket to every 17-year-old Jew to visit Israel.

In a five-page proposal, Mr. Beilin argued that Jewish groups should be less Israel-orientated because the Jewish state was less threatened by the Arab World, more economically independent and had succeeded in bringing a half-million immigrants to Israel in the past five years.

"These changes have made it impossible to continue to base Israel-diaspora relations primarily on charity," he said.

"Nonsense," snorted Yehiel Leket, head of the Jewish Agency which channels money to immigrants.

"Every Jewish kid will get a gift of a free plane ticket and help to come to Israel, and (Beilin) is ready to give up the Jewish contributions? I think it's very strange," said Mr. Leket, who took over the Jewish Agency this year amid a corruption scandal.

Mr. Beilin, the youthful bad boy of Israeli politics, was immediately and sharply reprimanded by his boss, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

"I view the cooperation between the state of Israel and... the Jewish people around the world as historical, religious, vital," Mr.

Rabin told Jewish Agency fundraisers, stressing that Israel still faced a military threat from the Arab World. "Beilin" simply does not know what he is talking about."

The agency is widely seen by Israelis as riddled by corruption and politics. But it is also seen as one of the holy cows of Zionism, the body established in 1923 that set in motion Israel's creation in Palestine in 1948.

Earlier this year, Mr. Beilin infuriated senior diaspora activists by telling them that Israel, listed as 18 on the world standard of living scale, no longer needed contributions from the diaspora. He even suggested that Israelis raise money to contribute to depressed Jewish communities overseas.

As if that was not enough, he routinely tells diaspora Jewish audiences to interfere in Israeli politics and make their voices heard on crucial issues like the peace process.

The maverick approach is consistent with Mr. Beilin's most impressive achievement to date: A year ago, he persuaded Mr. Rabin to overturn years of entrenched Israeli policy by recognising the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

That upheaval led to the historic Israel-PLO peace accord, and the introduction of Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

"We deluded ourselves with the PLO until a year ago," Mr. Beilin, 44, told the Associated Press. "Now we should stop deluding ourselves about the Jewish world."

Mr. Beilin suggested more emphasis would be placed on

issues facing Jews everywhere, such as assimilation, and not just Israel-oriented concerns. He said Israel would donate to a new organisation called the House of Israel, as would Jews abroad.

He proposed that every Jewish teenager in the diaspora should be offered a voucher to be used for travel to Israel and back home between his or her 17th and 18th birthdays. He estimated it would cost \$150 million to \$200 million a year if 85,000 young people came annually.

Mr. Beilin presented his proposal at a top-level Israel-diaspora conference sponsored by President Ezer Weizman. The president said he called the 200 delegates to the gathering because he saw a crisis brewing between Jews here and abroad.

Diaspora participants agreed.

Steven Cohen, a demographer with the Hebrew University, told the conference that intermarriage among American Jews stood at 43 per cent. He predicted that only one in ten grandchildren of today's young adult Jews would identify as Jewish.

Letty Cottin Pogrebin said surveys showed 80 per cent of American Jews had never visited Israel and 85 per cent of American Jewish college students said it was difficult to identify in any way with the Jewish state.

"There is a paradox of success," said Alan Dereshowitz, a prominent American lawyer and Jewish activist from Boston. "The more things go well for individual Jews in America, the more they become worse for the Jewish community and for support for Israel."

U.N. fears fresh Afghan refugee flood

SAR SHAHI CAMP, Afghanistan (R) — The United Nations, striving to help more than 100,000 refugees from the war-shattered Afghan capital Kabul, said on Thursday it lacks the resources to handle a new influx and fears new fighting.

"If there is a battle in Kabul, where will we place more displaced people?" Martin Barber, acting director of the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCHA), told visiting reporters.

About 113,000 people, almost all former residents of Kabul, are living in squalid conditions — short of food, water and cooking fuel — in a tent city at Sar Shahi Camp, 10 kilometres east of the Eastern city of Jalalabad.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has run the crowded camp on a shoestring since tens of thousands of refugees streamed out of Kabul in January to escape the latest bloody battle for supremacy that erupted on January 1 between President Burhanuddin Rabbani and Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

The camp is already housing three times more refugees than it was originally designed to hold, said camp manager Terry Pitzer.

"In these temperatures it is intolerable," Mr. Pitzer said

as the refugees sizzled in 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) heat. The power supply to Jalalabad and the nearby camp has been cut for 10 days and water is scarce.

The camp, which sprawls over about 16 square kilometres of arid gravel and scrubland, can hold no more refugees because of the water shortages, Mr. Pitzer said.

U.N. officials said they were anxious about reports of a recent escalation of the clashes in Kabul and fears of a new and serious upsurge in the fighting in the run-up to the expiry of Mr. Rabbani's term in office on June 28.

"We are hearing that from 10,000 to 100,000 may come out," Mr. Pitzer said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Arafat meets Yemeni delegation

TUNIS (AFP) — A north Yemeni parliamentary delegation, seeking support for north Yemen's campaign against southern secessionists, met here Thursday with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, official sources said. The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader stressed the need to "continue efforts to reach a just solution that takes into account the interests of the Yemeni people," the Palestinian news agency Wafa reported. The Yemeni delegation, which also met with Tunisian parliamentary leaders and members of legal opposition groups, accused Saudi Arabia of supplying arms to southern forces, according to diplomatic sources.

Shiseido to restart Lebanon sales operations

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's largest cosmetics producer, Shiseido Co., said Wednesday it will restart sales operations in Lebanon from March next year through local agent CH Sarraf and Co. Sal. Shiseido said it signed an agent sales contract with Sal. Sarraf, the president of CH Sarraf, on Tuesday in Tokyo to restart operations halted by civil war in 1982. CH Sarraf began selling Shiseido products in 1975. The two companies began negotiating the restart of operations as the conflict came to an end in 1989. Sales will begin through 10 sales outlets in the first year, including department stores and exclusive perfumeries, growing to 30 outlets by the third year, Shiseido said. It forecast sales of \$2.1 million over a three year period. Shiseido has a sales network spanning 40 countries.

UAE promotes international defence show

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has launched a drive in Asia, Eastern Europe and other areas to attract exhibitors for its second international defence exhibition due to open early next year. Brigadier Sultan Al-Sneidi, who heads the organising committee, has visited Singapore, Malaysia, China, Indonesia, India, Ukraine, Russia, the United States, France, Australia and other states and is planning to make more visits to promote the March 19-23 exhibition. "With nine months to go to the opening of the exhibition, we are already two thirds full," he said in a statement. The show, held in Abu Dhabi every two years, is confined to ground and naval weapons to avoid interference with an international air show in Dubai, another UAE emirate. Hundreds of companies from more than 30 countries participated in the 1993 show in Abu Dhabi, where the French Giat signed its biggest military deal with the UAE for the supply of 436 Leclerc main battle tanks.

Yemeni fasts 5 days to conceal heroin pills

CAIRO (AP) — A Yemeni who swallowed plastic pills containing heroin fasted for five days in an airport transit lounge while waiting for a plane to his country, police said. He was arrested after he fainted from hunger. Mustapha Abdullah, 57, passed out in the Cairo international airport on Tuesday. A doctor who treated him said Mr. Abdullah coughed up a pill four centimetres in diameter after taking medicine. In a Cairo hospital, doctors pumped his stomach and extracted another seven pills, said Dr. Salaheddin Taher, the airport quarantine doctor who administered the medicine. "He was in an extreme state of exhaustion, apparently due to not having eaten," Mr. Taher said. He said the Yemeni arrived last Thursday and admitted to fasting since then to prevent passing the heroin. Security sources said the man had planned to take a connecting flight to Sanaa soon after arriving in Cairo, but "flights were cancelled" due to Yemen's civil war.

Inquiry clears police in Cyprus shooting

NICOSIA (R) — A public inquiry has ruled that Cyprus anti-terrorist police who shot dead an engaged couple on Christmas eve after bursting into their flat to resolve a domestic dispute acted responsibly and within the law. Supreme Court President Andreas Loizou rejected suggestions from family members that the officers who launched the televised raid after the man threatened to kill his 22-year-old fiancée were overzealous and guilty of murder. "The police acted in an appropriate manner... they handled the whole incident correctly and in a responsible manner, within the law and in accordance with the constitution," government spokesman Yiannakis Casoulides said on Wednesday, quoting the conclusion of Mr. Loizou's report. The police killed the bodies of Lefteris Andronikou, 34, and his fiancée Eri Constantinou with bullets after bursting into their flat in Chlorakas, a small village in western Cyprus, following a domestic dispute. Andronikou, armed with a hunting rifle, had threatened to kill Constantinou and then commit suicide. The 10-hour rescue attempt was broadcast live on a private television station.

Omani women allowed to stand for council

MUSCAT (R) — Omani women living in the capital Muscat will be allowed to stand for election for the first time to the Shura Council, the Sultanate's consultative body, an Omani official said. The deputy governor of Muscat, Barghash Ben Said Al-Said, told reporters women would be allowed to make nominations and stand in this year's elections which will send new representatives to the council from Muscat. He said the decision "reflected the abilities of the Omani woman and put her on an elevated level of responsibility... playing a more active role in pushing the pace of development." It was not clear from Ben Said's statement whether Omani women in areas other than Muscat would be affected by the decision. Shura Council members represent the interests of their areas and debate government policies before they are given final approval by Sultan Qaboos.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:00 Le Monde Show
18:00 Dossier De La Semaine
18:30 News in French
18:45 Ushuaia
19:00 News in Hebrew
19:25 World Cup Soccer Match Saudi Arabia vs. Morocco
21:20 Daily World Cup Summary
22:00 News in English
22:15 Reasonable Doubts

PRAYER TIMES

03:51 Fajr
05:27 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:38 Dhuhr
16:12 Asr
19:59 Maghrib
21:25 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Switzerland Tel: 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel: 622785
St. Joseph Church Tel: 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel: 627440
De la Sante Church Tel: 661757
Terrence Church Tel: 622666
Church of the Annunciation Tel: 623441

Anglican Church Tel: 630851, Tel: 628543

Assyrian Catholic Church Tel: 713331

Assyrian Orthodox Church Tel: 713261

St. Ephraim Church Tel: 717251

Assyrian International Church Tel: 652526

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel: 624328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel: 684195

The Latter-Day Saints Tel: 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel: 675091

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel: 511295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Mild weather conditions will prevail with winds westerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 14/26

Aqaba 22/34

Deserts 14/29

Jordan Valley 20/32

Yesterday's high temperature: Amman 27, Aqaba 37 Humidity readings: Amman 38 per cent, Aqaba 30 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Mohammed Alabbadi 778959
Dr. Nidal Dahleh 827195
Dr. Bassam Karadseh 799200
Dr. Yahya Abdul Salam 736072
First pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asena pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 626372
Al Salem pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shameen pharmacy 637680
Najib pharmacy 847632

AMMAN:

Dr. Mohammed Al Hilu 277773

Aiquds pharmacy (-)

ZARQA:

Dr. Walid Halaseh 982799

Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 631111
Civil Defence Immediate
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Blood Bank 891028
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 010230
Overseas Calls 680104
Central Amman Telephone 815615

HOSPITALS

AT TAJIL:

Hussein Medical Centre 7381332

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 6442816

Akileh Maternity, J. Amn 6424112

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shamsani 6641714

Shamsani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Mushtaq Hospital 6672278

The Islamic, Abdali 66612737

Al-Abdi, Abdali 6641646

Italian, Al-Mutajir 777013

Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafiah 7511126

Army, Marka 8916115

Queen Alia Hospital 6024950

Amal Hospital 674155

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel: (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

(Terminal 1)

06:00 Vienna (OA)

15:45 Rome, Larnaca (MS)

20:30 Paris, Damascus (AF)

21:45 Cairo (MS)

23:25 Amsterdam (KL)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:20 Vienna (OA)

15:45 Rome, Larnaca (MS)

20:30 Paris, Damascus (AF)

21:45 Cairo (MS)

23:25 Amsterdam (KL)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:00 Vienna (OA)

15:45 Rome, Larnaca (MS)

20:30 Paris, Damascus (AF)

21:45 Cairo (MS)

23:25 Amsterdam (KL)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:20 Vienna (OA)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday

Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday

Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday

Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in file per kg.

Apple 550/400

Apricots 500/300

Banana 680

Banana (Mukammal) 150/60

Cabbage 300/220

Corn 1300/800

Cherry 1200/700

Cauliflower 170/100

Cucumbers (large) 60/40

Cucumbers (small) 150/100

Eggplant 160/80

Garlic 300/220

Grapes 1300/800

Lemon 500/300

Marrow (large) 500/350

Marrow (small) 150/100

Onion 60/40

Pepper 350/250

Pepper (hot

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
Established 1975
الردان نيوز جازية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية

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Stop reckless drivers!

SUMMER HAS barely begun and the number of road accidents is already going up. The culprits are mainly young drivers allowed by their parents to sit behind the steering wheel before they are ready. It takes more than a driving licence to be able to drive a vehicle safely in our congested streets. It needs prudence and sane judgement, something that a driver's test may not show. Normally all those who seek driving permits put on their best behaviour when they undergo the necessary tests but shed off these attributes the moment they are alone in their own cars.

As a result, many people are losing their lives, especially in the summer holidays when young students take on the thoroughfares of the country as if with a vengeance. The fact that many of those young people's parents are influential makes it very difficult for the authorities to take affirmative action against violators or would-be violators of traffic rules. Many people drive through red traffic lights and stop signs with impunity day on and day out. Traffic policemen are normally nowhere in sight to stop these grave traffic contraventions.

This suggests that much more needs to be done to stop the fatal accidents on our roads. It is not enough to recall the rise of traffic accidents once a year when the world commemorates safe driving. We need an effective and endless campaign to root out the growing problem from our streets based on expeditious punishment of all those who are found guilty irrespective of their social, political or economic status. The mass media can also contribute to eliminating traffic accidents by highlighting them on daily basis until the message gets across to all those who could be directly or indirectly responsible for them.

In order would be the granting of a temporary driving licence on a probationary basis. If the record of any given driver is so alarming the first year or so, his or her permit must be withdrawn or even cancelled. Whatever it is, we need to get more serious in combatting reckless driving habits that gamble with the lives of innocent people. Parental control and guidance are also called for.

In these times when freedom has become associated with slackening parental control over their children, parents must be made legally responsible for the crimes that their children commit when they drive the family car. As long as fathers and mothers of young drivers are absolved of civil and criminal responsibility for the actions of their offspring, they would continue to take lightly their duty to control the behaviours of their sons and daughters.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL DUSTOUR daily Sunday commented on U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's scheduled tour of the Middle East region by expressing belief that it constitutes a fresh indication that the United States is keen on pursuing the peace process. But, shutting between Arab capitals to convey the views of leaders is not enough to achieve the aspired peace, especially on the Syrian-Israeli track, which has not yet seen by progress, the paper said. To achieve peace and ensure the return of the Golan Heights to Syrian sovereignty, said the paper, requires serious efforts on the part of the United States administration which should help end Israel's intransigence and persuade its leaders to withdraw Israeli forces from the occupied plateau. Without real pressure on the Israelis, said the paper, there can be no chance for Mr. Christopher to achieve any result from his fresh mission, added the daily.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour discussed the "lottery" announced by the United States embassy in Amman inviting people to submit applications for immigrant visas, and said this could be a trap. Mohammad Daoud said that the lottery programme could be designed to attract certain types of youth or skilled people to become incorporated in the American nation, benefiting the United States and depriving their original countries of their skill. The writer said that the Americans are trying to exploit the uneasy situation in many of the Third World countries, luring them to American, with keen interest in attracting talented youths from the Arab World whose own countries have spent a fortune on their training. With the departure of skilled and talented youth from the Third World countries, the developing world would be deprived of the means for development and progress, added the daily. The writer cautioned Jordanians to abort "Washington's plots" and urged the Arab regimes to offer talented and skilled people all facilities for creative work necessary for the Arab World's progress and development.

Jordanian Perspective

A new era in Jordan-U.S. relations

By Dr. Musa Keilani

BY ALL counts, the summit between His Majesty King Hussein and U.S. President Bill Clinton on Wednesday marked a new era in relations between Jordan and the United States. It was indeed the third such summit since Mr. Clinton took office, but the atmosphere that prevailed during the two earlier encounters was not exactly very clear since the priorities of the sides were far apart. Now, it seems, the Clinton administration has sent a strong signal that it has come to accept the reality of the consistency of the Jordanian position and the principled position of the Kingdom over the decades. That is indeed the most important step forward in a direction that would bring back and intensify warmth and cordiality in Amman-Washington relations.

Jordan was never a spoiler in the quest for peace in the Middle East. If anything, one of the main catalysts in the peace process that was launched in Madrid in 1991 was King Hussein's persistent calls for a negotiated just, comprehensive and just settlement to the root conflict plaguing the lives of the people of the region.

President Clinton's offer to play a personal role to efforts to advance Jordanian-Israeli negotiations was of course a clear understanding of Jordan's position and commitment to reaching a negotiated settlement based in fairness and justice for all.

The Kingdom's refocused turn in 1989 towards democracy — a basic element of American approach — was not an accident either. It reflected our leadership's commitment to expanding people's participation in decision-making as soon as the political constraints imposed by external factors beyond the control of Jordan were eased.

The King's meeting with U.S. congressmen on Wednesday produced a reaffirmation of the American lawmakers' support for the democratisation under way in Jordan. Hopefully, they also appreciate that Jordan is pedalling a sole boat in the turbulent waters of the Middle East and any overt move could jeopardise its course.

Definitely, any just settlement in the region has to have as one of its pillars an improvement in the lives of people. The man in the street should feel the fruits of peace reflecting on his life in terms of better living conditions and tension-free political participation if peace has to be consolidated. That objective is not possible against the present backdrop of the yawning economic disparities among the different countries.

On our part in Jordan, the government, the Armed Forces and the officialdom as well as the private sector are gearing up to interact with the requirements of peace. Optimism is high among Jordanians that they are on the threshold of an era that would herald economic prosperity and development for all.

Obviously the subject was also one of the key themes in the King's talks with President Clinton and other American officials, including Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown and Defence Secretary William Perry as well as U.S. lawmakers.

It is naive to expect Jordan to play a full and effective part in rebuilding a stable Middle East when it is burdened with one of the highest per capita foreign debts in the world. The need to service those debts from the limited financial resources of Jordan has been a key constraint in the Kingdom's options.

The least that we would expect from the U.S. to help the Kingdom in this context is a write-off of Jordan's debts, estimated at JD 950 million. Compared with the (acknowledged) annual U.S. aid of nearly \$6 billion to Israel (and Egypt) for the ostensible purpose of maintaining peace in the region, the Jordanian debts should not be a problem for Washington. But the peril that we face at this point in time is perhaps an American insistence on linking a debt write-off with the actual signing of a peace agreement between Jordan and Israel.

Hopefully, among things that President Clinton had in mind included Jordan's debt burden when he said that "we

will do whatever we can" to keep the momentum in peace process going.

The most tangible result of the Washington summit is an end to the damaging sea-based inspection of Jordan-bound cargo. The process, which taxed Jordan more than \$1.2 billion since it started in August 1990, will now be replaced with a land-based verifications regime at a much, much lower cost while respect is assured for Jordan's political sovereignty and territorial integrity. The nuances that held up an agreement were successfully sorted out during the Jordanian delegation's talks in Washington.

Jordanian security needs were also addressed during the Washington discussions. Maintaining internal security and being able to defend itself while not posing any military threat to its neighbours are two essential elements in the commitment of any country to regional peace. Jordan is no different. If anything, an additional element to the Jordanian equation is the fact that a properly equipped Jordanian security force will be an asset to international peacekeeping operations. We Jordanians have proved our willingness to contribute to international peacekeeping in former Yugoslavia, Cambodia and several other trouble spots. In essence, help given to Jordan's security forces represents help to keeping peace and stability elsewhere as and when needed.

We are indeed aware that there is a handful of American agencies and institutions that still harbour ill-founded suspicions about Jordan. But then it is a fact of life that such agencies and institutions have their own parameters and considerations while judging any country, and there is very little that we in Jordan or the administration itself could do to dispel them. Quite simply Jordan cannot sacrifice its principles for the sake of pleasing them. We hope that those agencies and institutions take in the consistency of Jordan's position throughout the decades of wars and upheavals in the Middle East as the starting point for a possible reassessment of the Kingdom.



No easy way out of Nigerian crisis

By James Jukwey
Reuters

LAGOS — Prospects of a quick solution to a political crisis in Nigeria are dim after millionaire businessman Moshod Abiola defied the military authorities and declared himself president, analysts said.

Mr. Abiola, widely acknowledged as the winner of last year's annulled presidential election, is still in hiding from police since making the announcement at a secretly staged ceremony in Lagos on the 12 anniversary of the June 12 election.

No foreign power has so far recognised his presidency, but political analysts say he must be party to any deal that aims to solve the crisis and bring lasting peace to Nigeria.

"There can't be a solution without involving Abiola in any dialogue," said one former state governor. "After all he won an election which the military annulled," he added.

Many, however, doubt that one year after the cancelled vote Mr. Abiola can expect to become president without a hard fight.

"Indeed, so much water has passed under the bridge that chief Moshod Abiola would find it extremely difficult to rule this country without further negotiations," wrote political commentator Ude Eze in the daily Times newspaper.

The present administration has made it clear that the vote, cancelled by former military president Ibrahim Babangida, cannot be restored without causing more chaos in Nigeria.

General Sani Abacha, who seized power in November in the aftermath of chaos precipitated by the annulment, believes instead that his planned constitutional conference which started Monday remains the best way of restoring democracy.

Gen. Abacha has been meeting prominent Nigerians from across the country in Abuja, the inland capital, to promote dialogue as the only way out of the crisis but has left the opposition in no doubt that he would not step down for Mr. Abiola as they are demanding.

While talking to a cross-section of people the government has so far rebuffed the opposition National Democratic Coalition (NADECO), which backs Mr. Abiola's quest for the

presidency. NADECO says it is willing to talk with the government but the administration says the group is not registered.

The stand-off is compounded by the detention of dozens of opposition members over their call for Gen. Abacha to quit for Mr. Abiola.

Mr. Abiola's proclamation followed weeks of tension over whether or not he would make good his avowed intention to declare his own government and risk a confrontation with the military.

When it finally came, there were no journalists present to record what is the biggest challenge to the federal authority since 1966 when Emeka Ojukwu declared the secession of Biafra in southeastern Nigeria

which led to a civil war in which more than one million people died.

A week of protests arranged by pro-democracy groups to support him failed to make much impact and only minor protests were staged in his home region, the Yorubaland speaking southwest.

Commentators said Nigerians face such hard economic times that people want to be left alone to get on with their lives.

But they said despite the calm prevailing in most parts of Nigeria, the southwest was still volatile and that there could be riots there if Mr. Abiola was arrested.

The wealthy businessman is due to make his first public appearance since his June 11 proclamation sometime this week, probably at

a public rally, his aides said. Police have vowed they will arrest him if they see him.

Gen. Abacha is meanwhile pressing ahead with his pet constitutional conference despite scepticism from opposition groups that the conference is designed to prolong military rule.

While the government appears to be controlling the conference, with the nomination of nearly a third of the participants and the appointment of its presiding officers, more people now seem to be speaking up in favour of the conference.

"We must accept the reality of the constitutional conference and channel all national grievances to it, including June 12, for deliberations and firm resolution," said former senator Ebenezer Ikoyina.

by Elia Nasrallah

THE MIDDLE East question, His Majesty King Hussein's visit to the United States, domestic affairs and pan-Arab issues featured in the columnists' articles of the Jordanian local press in the past week.

Al Ra'i daily said that the King's visit to the United States has permitted him to better present the Jordanian position and the Kingdom's demands at the peace process. The United States, added the paper, now better understands the Kingdom's legitimate demands for the restoration of all its lands and water and its needs for contributing towards a lasting peace.

Al Dustour said that the King's discussions in the United States with the U.S. administration officials and President Bill Clinton represent Jordan's continued drive to ensure a peaceful settlement. It said that the King was keen on conveying to Washington the Kingdom's position and de-

mands that are legitimate and that are required to ensure stability and security in the Middle East.

Taher Al Adwan, a columnist in Al Dustour, said that the United States now holds all the cards not only with regard to the Middle East peace process, but also towards various world issues. It is not in the interest of Jordan to be in confrontation with the United States, he said, saying that the strained relations with Washington over the past four years have helped to tighten the siege on the country which started in the wake of the Gulf crisis. The writer said that redressing the strained relations and creating a new concept in

bilateral ties are bound to further boost the chances for stability and would be most beneficial for the Kingdom.

Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Dustour, said that Israel's continued drive to raid Lebanon and to pursue repression in the West Bank does not reflect good intentions which, he said, reflect the Jewish state's true nature and its determination to remain adamant in its aggressive stand. The writer said that the Israelis are also taking a very stubborn stand with regard to the repatriation of the released detainees to their homeland and continue to imprison Hamas

members, including their leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin in further show of disregard to the Arab demands.

Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dustour, said that the Israeli authorities are making it difficult for the Palestinian police force to control self-rule areas by keeping the released detainees away from their hometowns. The writer said the Israelis are complicating matters further by blocking the Palestine National Authority's drive to reconstruct institutions required to ensure stability and security in these areas.

Ahmad Al Mislak, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that Israel's jails continue to take in more Palestinian de-

tainees and continue to serve as home to all those who refuse to sign statements abandoning their resistance campaign against occupation. For this and other reasons, at least 6,000 detainees in Israeli jails have started an open hunger strike and for this reason their kinsmen in the occupied territories are determined to pursue the struggle until their lands have become free once again, he said.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaah daily commented on a statement issued by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) about poverty in Jordan, saying that the problem according to the

statement has reached dangerous proportions. Figures released in that statement showed that 21.3 per cent of people in Jordan live in poverty, which is nearly one quarter of the population, said Shafiq Obaidat. The writer said that the poverty problem cannot be solved through providing JD 50 a month for a poor family but rather through closer cooperation on the part of the private and public institutions towards creating job opportunities.

Ahmad Dahbas, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaah, said that doctors estimate the number of people suffering from diabetes in Jordan at 200,000. The writer said that caring for the diabetics can be much cheaper through collective action on the part of the concerned parties and organisations simply because many of the diabetics are poor and cannot afford the cost of treatment on their own.

Leftists bo

ATHENS (R) — A bomb exploded in a crowded Athens subway station today, killing three people and wounding 15 others. The explosion occurred near the entrance to the station, which was crowded with commuters. The cause of the explosion is still under investigation.

S. Africa re

UNITED NATIONS Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said today that the United Nations will continue to support the process of democratic reform in South Africa. He emphasized the importance of ensuring a smooth transition to a new constitution and a new government.

N. Zealande

WELLINGTON — A 22-year-old man was killed today when his car crashed into a wall. The driver, who was not wearing a seat belt, was killed instantly. The accident occurred on a busy road in the city center.

Mandela nam

PRETORIA (R) — The head of the military in the Communist Party of South Africa, General Moshod Abiola, said today that he was willing to negotiate with the government to end the crisis in Nigeria. He called for a peaceful resolution to the political turmoil.

UNITA welc

LUSAKA (AFP) — UNITA welcomed the agreement between the government and the rebel group, saying it was a step towards ending the conflict in Angola. The group expressed hope for a peaceful future for the country.

Hong Kong

SINGAPORE (A) — A man was killed today when his car crashed into a wall. The driver, who was not wearing a seat belt, was killed instantly. The accident occurred on a busy road in the city center.

China's minorities fight poverty trap

By Giles Hewitt
Agence France Presse

KAILI, China — South-west China's ethnic minorities adorn the cover of many a regional tourist brochure here, but the colourful images belie the harsh reality of a life spent on the margins of mainstream society.

While the equality of all nationalities was enshrined in Communist China's founding constitution, the vast majority of the more than 30 minority groups located in Guizhou, Yunnan and Guangxi provinces still eke out a subsistence lifestyle in some of the country's poorest and most isolated regions.

Around 35 per cent of Guizhou's 33 million population are registered ethnic minorities, most of them living in the province's three specially designated autonomous prefectures of Qiannan, Qianxian and Qiongdongnan.

In their home village some 32 kilometres from Qiongdongnan's urban centre Kaili, Pan Jiahe, 26, and his 60-year-old father, both from the Miao nationality — view their minority lifestyles from different perspectives.

For Pan's father, economic reform has meant a significant shift in living standards, allowing his family to sell surplus produce on the open market and move beyond mere subsistence farming.

But Pan, who works as a teacher in Kaili and like many of his generation is impatient with the pace of change in the countryside, feels that not enough is being done to improve the lot of the minorities.

"Things are certainly better than they were 20 years ago, but it is meaningless to talk about equality if the opportunities don't exist to realise its benefits," he said.

Despite government plans to establish a mandatory nine-year education nationwide by the turn of the century, even six years of education is still a rarity among the minorities in

Guizhou, where the school drop-out rate — especially for girls — is extremely high.

According to Yang Guizhou, deputy director of the Guizhou Education Commission, the government has made minority education a priority but faces a formidable task.

"Some of these people are still facing clothing and food problems, so schooling obviously takes a back seat, which is why we have more than 200,000 dropouts from primary and middle schools every year," Mr. Yang said.

All of Guizhou's 17 native minorities, which include the Miao, Dong, Tu, Yi, Gebo and Yao, speak mutually unintelligible dialects and as many as two million are unable to speak standard Mandarin Chinese, while many more are illiterate.

For a few selected villages, tourism has provided a partial exit from the poverty circle, as they receive monthly stipends from the local tourism bureau to put on impromptu "traditional" festivals for foreign visitors — complete with singers and dancers clad in embroidered costumes and silver jewelry.

The vast majority, however, rely on preferential government policies which include basic food subsidies and projects, involving U.N. funding, to develop agriculture and promote cottage industries like handicrafts.

Minorities were also given special dispensations when the one-child family was introduced in 1981, and are currently allowed to have two, or even three children.

For those who manage to leave their villages, life in the towns and cities dominated by China's Han majority has its own drawbacks.

"I can make a better living here, but certain people definitely look down on me," said Zhong Wanshu, a Dong who works in a Kaili electronics factory and whose Han in-laws have only recently accepted his marriage to their daughter three years ago.

Touring the world on four wheels

Retired, determined, and not short of time, the Schmidts board their Land Cruiser on a drive to the Guinness records. Rana Hussein reports



ON THE ROAD: The Schmidts in their trustworthy vehicle (file photo)

through the desert, mountains or rivers, their four wheeler was also their restaurant, bedroom and bathroom.

They travelled 33,680 kilometres, 8610 hours of driving, consumed 81,396 litres of gasoline and 37 tyres and fitted 97 punctures. They also exhausted 16 car batteries and changed oil 49 times.

"We enjoy being in the nature and coming in con-

tact with new cultures," said Mr. Schmid, a retired financial manager.

Before entering a new country, the team said they would study its geography and habits, culture, traditions and laws. But to their great relief, things were better than expected.

"Although we had a specific image about each country we wanted to visit, to our surprise things were

completely different from what is really said," Mr. Schmid said.

"People were very nice, helpful and peaceful and offered us help and shelter when we needed it," he said.

The beautiful landscapes and nature pushed the couple to keep looking for something new every day.

Mrs. Schmid described a wonderful experience at dawn in Australia: "We

were sleeping in the car as usual, and when I woke up early in the morning I saw a small kangaroo looking at me and when he saw me looking at him he ran away."

Their global trip was graphed, photographed and preserved by Mrs. Schmid who had already shipped nearly 150 kilograms of souvenirs and more than 12,000 slides back home.

So far, the couple admitted they have been "lucky" for not having faced any serious troubles, except for one "frightening" incident when their Swiss colleague was shot five times by someone wielding an AK47 during a trip through Guatemala.

"We still don't know why he was attacked. The same group of people followed us but we somehow managed to escape," he said.

The couple, who arrived in Jordan from Saudi Arabia on June 13, left for Syria Wednesday in bid to break the current Guinness world record of 83 countries, which is credited to Manfred Muller and Paul Ernest Lubers, two Germans who drove into the records book back in 1991 for journeying 350,000 kilometres across 83 countries in a tiny Citroen 2cv.

"All we need is to prove that we have crossed from one country to another with the same car and documents. Then we will apply for it," Mr. Schmid explained.

Having been married for 25 years, the couple said the only challenge they will face when the trip ends is adjusting to the Swiss system and routine which they abandoned in 1984.

"Life on the road has humbled us. In Switzerland, we really never valued what we had. But in our 10 years (of travel) we've grown closer as a couple and learned and experienced so many different things other than our routine life back home, which is going to be very hard to get used to again."

Zimbabwe anxious to revive trade pact with Pretoria

By Francis Mdlomwa
Reuters

HARARE — Zimbabwean exporters, crucial to the country's economic revival, hope South Africa's new government will quickly revive a preferential trade pact.

The Harare government says it plans "vigorous" talks with Pretoria to renew the pact, which dated back to 1964 but which South Africa's previous white rulers allowed to lapse.

Economic analysts say the renewal of the agreement, which covered annual two-way trade worth at least \$250 million, could take time because Pretoria is preoccupied with domestic issues and present trade agreements suit it.

"It seems the South Africans are not particularly concerned to get the trade accord renewed too quickly because they benefit more as things stand now," a bank economist said.

"They want to give time to their industries to prepare for competition," Diplomatic sources said Zimbabwe had submitted draft proposals to the South Africans for their study but no negotiations were under way.

Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe said during a visit to London in May he hoped for a new trade pact towards the end of the year. He mentioned the need for it to South African President Nelson Mandela.

Political analysts said it appeared unlikely Pretoria would approve a bilateral agreement before a planned review of overall relations with the countries of Southern Africa.

"South Africa is proceeding as slowly as possible and I don't think there will be any significant signing until there has been a major review of all agreements," one analyst said. He suggested other coun-

tries in the region, including South Africa's partners Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana and Namibia within the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), would oppose preferential treatment for Zimbabwe.

The same reaction might also be expected from other countries which are members of the 10-nation Southern African Development Community (SADC), which South Africa is due to join at its annual summit to be held in Tanzania in August.

South Africa's new Trade Minister Trevor Manuel said last month he would promote a rationalisation of economic organisations in the region.

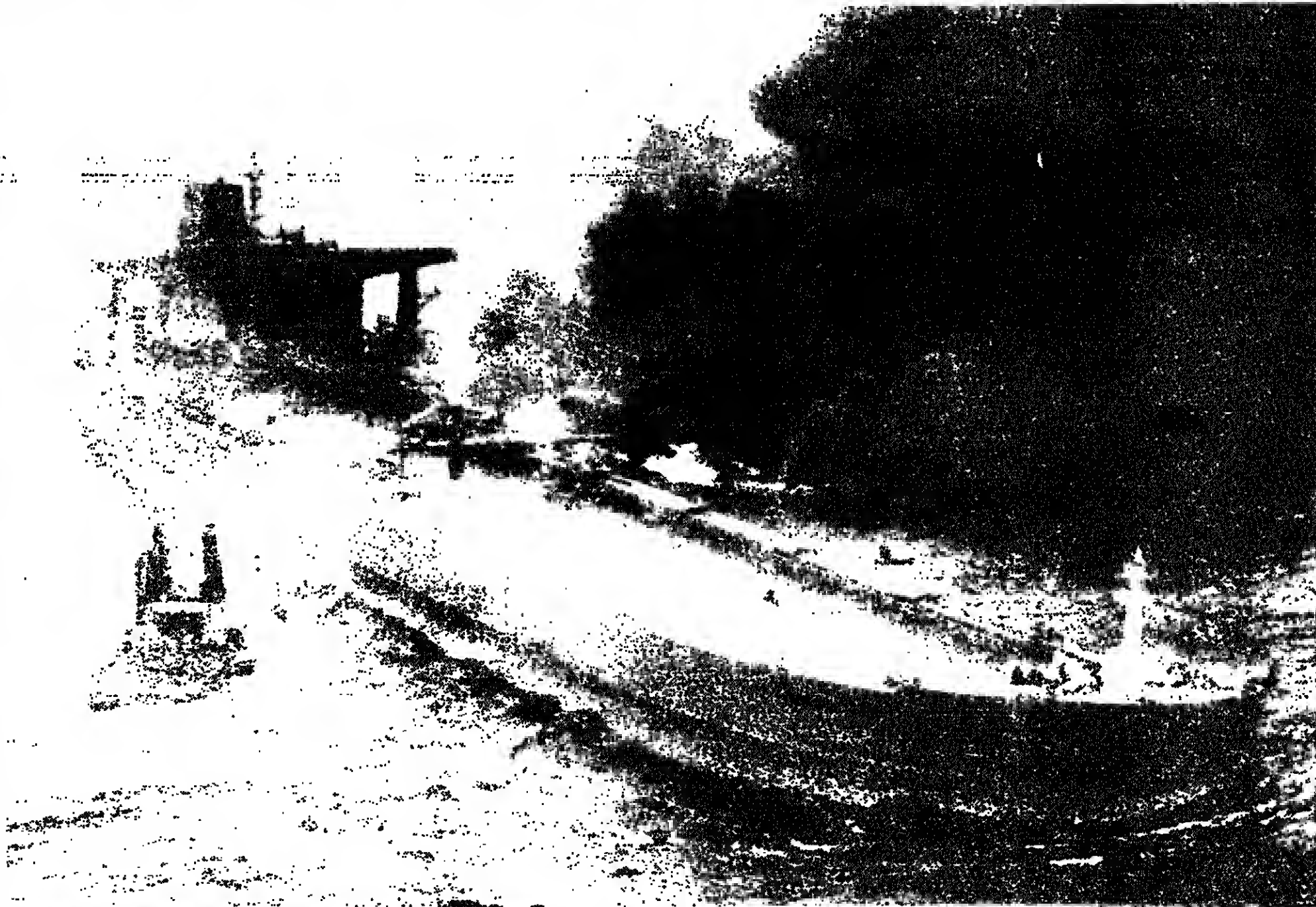
In allowing the trade pact to lapse, thus imposing 50 per cent duties on Zimbabwean goods, Pretoria said it was protecting its own industries, mainly textiles and clothing, from unfair competition.

It hit most Zimbabwean exports to South Africa, its biggest trading partner in the region, and forced Zimbabweans to look for new markets in Europe and Asia which sharply increased transport costs.

The analysts saw the action by Pretoria in part as punishment for Zimbabwe's continued hostile attitude towards South Africa's white minority rulers negotiating their country's transition to democracy.

Mr. Mugabe was one of the most vociferous opponents of apartheid despite his country's heavy dependence on trade and transport with South Africa.

The two countries had trade missions which acted as virtual embassies, but full diplomatic ties were only established after April's landmark elections which brought Nelson Mandela and his African National Congress (ANC) to power.



A fireboat sprinkles water onto the burning supertanker Maersk Navigator off northern Sumatra in Indonesia. The 260,000-Maersk Navigator, carrying nearly two million barrels of oil, collided with the tanker San Honour resulting in a fire on the supertanker (AFP photo)

Tanker owners try to clean up environmental image

By Alistair Doyle
Reuters

OSLO — World tanker owners are seeking to clean up an image tarnished by oil spills arguing that tankers pollute oceans less than motorists dumping oil in town drains.

"Tanker accidents contribute just 4.7 per cent to oil spilled at sea... 99.98 per cent of oil arrives at its destination without incident," says their new brochure.

It comes from the International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO), an Oslo-based group, whose members control more than half the world's tankers.

Lobbying for a better reputation, the group says that television pictures of blazing tankers, vast oil

slicks and dying seabirds wildly exaggerate the problem of spills.

"More oil enters the sea from motorists draining their sump oil into the town drain than all the world's tankers," it says in an unprecedented series of leaflets.

But environmentalists say tanker owners will be viewed with suspicion by world opinion until they do more to prevent ageing, rusting tankers from sailing the oceans with poorly paid, badly-trained crews.

And they say that, whatever the global statistics, massive oil spills can be disastrous locally marine life can take 15 to 20 years to recover.

INTERTANKO is organising courses for traditionally secretive tanker owners on handling the media in a crisis as part of efforts to stir a debate ab-

out responsibility for all pollution.

It is publishing a series of statistics about tankers and the environment and plans to send representatives to the site of any major spills in future to counter what many owners view as immediate doomsaying by environmentalists.

"Many people remember the Braer tanker accident," said Tormod Rafsgaard, managing director of INTERTANKO.

The Braer ran aground off Britain's far-north Shetland Isles in early 1993, spilling 85,000 tonnes of oil into the sea double the amount spilt by the Exxon Valdez off Alaska in 1989.

"Nobody died, no one was even injured," he said. "Yet how many people remember the name of the Polish ferry that sank around the same time with the loss of more than 50

lives."

The car and rail ferry Jan Heweliusz, sailing between Sweden and Poland, capsized in high seas a week after the Braer ran aground. Fifty-four died in the icy waters.

Oil from the Braer was surprisingly quickly dispersed. INTERTANKO argues that environmentalists overlook the fact that natural forces often clean up spills far more quickly than expected but only after the media have lost interest.

"INTERTANKO is missing the point. The problem is that tanker owners suffer from the worst ones in the pack," said Paul Horsman, head of the oil campaign at the International Environmental Organisation Greenpeace.

"Until tanker owners acknowledge they have a role to play in getting rid of

the bad players, they will suffer from a bad reputation," he said.

"The way INTERTANKO can make a positive difference is by getting rid of the rust huckets, sub-standard crews and incompetent masters," he said.

"There's no answer in just making a pure public relations response."

According to INTERTANKO statistics, the average age of the world's 3,000 tankers is just over 13 years — close to the oldest in a generation. Many are far older than the average.

Mr. Horsman dismissed INTERTANKO's argument that oil spills are reported widely because they make good television.

"Oil is a toxic cargo. If you had containers washed overboard with pesticides it would be the same reaction even if there were no television pictures," he

said.

INTERTANKO argues it is pushing actively for better vessels and crews. Its statistics show that the number of accidents resulting in oil pollution has fallen by 50 per cent in 20 years.

And it says that about 20 per cent of the cost of a new tanker is dedicated to safety and anti-pollution measures — compared to about 7.5 per cent invested on similar schemes by manufacturing industry as a whole.

Yet some tanker owners believe the effort to turn the tide of public opinion may be wasted.

"Some owners reckon their reputation is 'bloody awful' and that getting it even to 'awful' would be too expensive," said Philip Rankin, an advisor at INTERTANKO.

Major industrialised countries intervene to rescue U.S. dollar

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States and at least eight other countries intervened in foreign exchange markets Friday to rescue the dollar, but the battered U.S. currency continued to slide.

The Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen confirmed the intervention by the Federal Reserve (Fed) and the central banks of the other Group of Seven (G-7) partners, the world's largest industrialised countries.

"Our actions today in cooperation with our G-7 partners and other monetary authorities reflect a shared concern about recent developments in financial markets," Mr. Bentsen said in a brief statement that raised the possibility of further action if Friday's efforts fail.

Mr. Bentsen said the United States looks forward "to continued cooperation to maintain the conditions necessary for sustained economic expansion with low inflation."

The Fed was joined in the action by G-7 members Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan. Denmark and Switzerland also confirmed their participation.

The Dutch and Austrian central banks bought dollars, currency dealers in New

York and Europe said.

The dollar's failure to rally after the interventions sparked selloffs on the U.S. stock and bond markets, and fears that the Federal Reserve will raise short-term interest rates for the fifth time this year to make dollar-denominated securities more attractive to investors.

In a volatile session on the New York Stock Exchange, the Dow Jones index of 30 leading industrials at one point was down more than 50 points in heavy trading. By 1:45 p.m. (1745 GMT), the Dow was down 44.71 points at 3,654.38.

The average interest rate on the main 30-year Treasury bond jumped to 7.51 per cent from 7.40 per cent late Thursday.

President Bill Clinton downplayed the dollar's weakness, saying it ran counter to the healing state of the U.S. economy.

The dollar's value is "a development that is puzzling a lot of economists because our economy is performing so well," he said in a radio interview from Air Force One.

Mr. Clinton pointed to the United States' lead in U.S. job growth compared with other advanced countries,

and an unemployment rate lower than that of any of the advanced countries except Japan.

"In a funny way, the currency values are running in the opposite direction of economic strength," he said.

The last international intervention, on May 4, involved 19 countries and was the largest such effort in more than a decade, but its effect was short-lived.

Friday's intervention came after the shaky dollar slid for a week and fell in Tokyo Friday to a new local closing low of 100.40 yen, from 101.31 yen Thursday. It had fallen below 100 yen in London in initial trading.

In New York, the dollar stood at 1.5960 marks just before the intervention by the Fed, which bought dollars against yen at 100.95 yen and at 101.55 yen.

The greenback jumped, then dipped and rose again following the concerted intervention. But the rally quickly eroded.

The Fed intervened again, this time against the German mark, buying dollars at the 1.6045-mark level, dealers said.

But by 1:25 p.m. (1725 GMT) in New York, the dollar was down to 1.5820 marks, far below Thursday's close of 1.6045 marks.

Against the Japanese yen, the dollar stood at 100.20, down from 101.40 Thursday.

The markets now believe the Fed will raise short-term interest rates at the next meeting of its policy-setting Open-Market Committee meeting, set July 5-6, dealers said.

In Tokyo, the governor of the Bank of Japan, Yasuichi Mieno, said currency instability is disturbing the fragile recovery of the Japanese economy.

Mr. Mieno also said that a recent surge in Japanese long-term interest rates reflected a reversal of expectations in the local bond market, indicating that rates had risen excessively in relation to economic fundamentals.

"The latest volatility in the foreign exchange market is a disturbing factor for the Japanese economy as it has just started to head towards a recovery," the central bank governor told a luncheon at the Japan National Press Club.

Mr. Mieno declined to comment on whether the Bank of Japan would conduct coordinated intervention in currency markets with other countries. But he said there was a consensus among the G-7 that foreign exchange rates should be stable and sharp volatility was undesirable.

Mr. Mieno said that the recovery of the Japanese economy could be undermined if strength of the yen accelerated a tendency by Japanese companies to move offshore although he acknowledged that the rise of the yen offered some benefits in the long term.

The rise of the yen might "prompt a reorganisation of Japanese industry, especially labour-intensive industry which is losing its competitive edge to Asian and formerly communist countries, thus dulling the tempo of economic recovery," he said.

"I'm not saying that the yen's rise is bad as it will have a certain benefit on the domestic economy in the longer run. But it has a big impact on the economy which is currently in a delicate phase," Mr. Mieno said.

Weekly analysis of movements, trends of major world currencies

This report, which covers the week from Thursday June 16, 94 to Wednesday June 22, 94, is provided by Naser Nabulsi, private client group at Merrill Lynch — Dubai.

Overview

Fundamental View: The dollar at a new postwar record low of JPY/USD 99.8 and also fell through the bottom of the DM/USD 1.60-to-1.70 range which we have expected to prevail for much of this year. Prospects for another bout of large-scale intervention by central banks and dollar support measures by the U.S. Treasury could help the dollar recover temporarily, but a number of fundamental and confidence factors are pointing toward ongoing dollar weakness in coming quarters.

We are accordingly revising down our outlook for the dollar against European currencies, and maintaining our cautious view of the dollar's prospects against the yen. We now expect the dollar to trade at the DM/USD 1.55 level in 12 months time compared to our previous forecast of DM/USD 1.70. We maintain our 12-month forecast for the dollar at JPY/USD 95.

Technical View: The European currencies were particularly strong against the U.S. dollar during the week ended June 17 and, as a result, the dollar index fell 2.2 per cent for the period. This was the index's largest week-to-week loss since April 1993. Despite this weakness, many of the sentiment indicators that we monitor for the dollar have actually deteriorated. The inability of the index to respond to generally constructive medium term indicators is obviously a sign of weakness.

Thus, despite the fact that the downtrend is mature, more discernible signs of dollar strength will be needed before a bottom is indicated. In that regard, a rally through 92.90-93.50 will be required to break the multi-month downtrend. Significant support exists at 88.30-90.30.

Japanese yen

Fundamental View: The dollar fell to a postwar record low against the yen, breaking below the JPY/USD 100 yen level at one point. U.S. Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen is expected to unveil a support package that could boost the dollar temporarily, but we maintain our view that the dollar will be difficult to stabilise against the yen and will eventually reach the JPY/USD 95 level over the next 12 months. Barring an aggressive move toward monetary tightening by the Fed, we expect statements pointing to improved U.S.-Japan trade relations will have relatively little impact. The dollar problem now has more to do with fundamental trade and financial imbalances rather than U.S.-Japan policies.

Even with the recent hike in U.S. interest rates and low overnight rates in Japan, it is not clear that Japanese investors are willing or able to finance the Japan's huge current account imbalance after having suffered large losses on their foreign and domestic investments in recent years. We continue to expect Japan to post a current account surplus of more than \$125 billion this year. We expect the weight of that surplus, relative to underlying private sector capital flows, to eventually push the dollar toward our 12-month target of 95 yen.

Deutschemark

Fundamental View: The dollar has fallen through the bottom of the DM/USD 1.60-to-1.70 range which we expected to prevail for much of this year. Prospects for another bout of large-scale intervention by central banks and dollar support measures by the U.S. Treasury could well boost the dollar back temporarily, but a number of factors are pointing toward a period of sustained dollar weakness in coming quarters. We are accordingly revising down our outlook for the dollar against European currencies.

Factors prompting us to revise our outlook for the dollar include (1) ongoing deterioration of the U.S. trade and current accounts accompanied by net outflows of long-term capital, (2) prospects for stronger growth in Europe and slower growth in the United States, (3) prospects for real interest rate differentials to start moving in favour of European currencies, and (4) the risk of continued weak confidence in U.S. economic and foreign policy among foreign investors.

Because the dollar is already at the weak end of its historic trading range and generally undervalued on a purchasing power parity basis, we expect further weakness to be rather modest. The key point is that the U.S. unit now seems unlikely to rally on a sustained basis unless the Fed raises interest rates far more aggressively than we expect. We now expect the dollar to trade at the DM/USD 1.55 level in 12 months time compared to our previous forecast of DM/USD 1.70.

Technical View: The Deutschemark rallied 3.4 per cent against the U.S. dollar last week and continued strong during the early part of this week. Medium term sentiment remains overbought, but showed initial signs of improvement last week. Medium term momentum continues to appear to be peaking.

but short term oscillators are still constructive. This last point, plus the breakout by the Swiss franc allows for at least a test 1993's resistance at 1.568-1.588 DM/USD.

A decline through 1.657-1.671 appears required to break the uptrend channel and, therefore, is viewed as first support. The mark/yen cross-rate remains in its multi-month trading range. Short term momentum is improving, and medium term oscillators remain constructive. This confluence allows for a test of the 1994 high just under 65.00. Nearby support is at 63.60 and 62.20.

Pound sterling

Fundamental View: The British pound moved higher with the German mark against the dollar in the past week, to U.S./GBP 1.53, but traded lower against the DM, near DM/GBP 2.47. In the near-term, we expect the pound to continue to trade in the 2.47-to-2.52 range that it has held since the beginning of March. In the longer-term, the pound should be able to benefit from a rising short-term rate premium against the mark. Signs of stronger economic growth reinforce our belief that U.S. base rates have bottomed. However, we do not expect an increase in rates before late in the year in light of significant spare capacity in the economy. In fact, the release of the minutes from the May 4 meeting between Bank of England Governor Eddie George and U.K. Chancellor Kenneth Clarke said that the two agreed that no change in U.K. interest rates was necessary for the time being.

A modest uptick in U.K. short-term rates coupled with a series of German repo rate cuts should lead the pound up to DM/GBP 2.60 in 12 months. In light of changes we made to dollar/Deutschemark forecast which looks for a stronger Deutschemark, we now expect the pound to trade at U.S./GBP 1.68 in 12 months rather than 1.53.

Technical View: The British pound rallied 1.7 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended June 10, thereby penetrating resistance at 1.52 U.S./L. Sentiment, while still officially neutral, is still at its most overbought extreme in almost two years. Short term momentum is upwardly biased, and — reflecting the narrow multi-month trading range — medium term oscillators continue to show very little definition. Resistance now exists at 1.55.

The lower end of the trading range at 1.46 is support; a break below that would allow for at least a test of the 1993 low near 1.43 and possibly long term support at 1.40-1.42. The DM cross-rate remains near its 1994 low and short term oscillators are weak. However, medium term oscillators are still trying to bottom, so while a test of 2.43-2.44 is still possible, an important low may not be that far away. First resistance exists at 2.515, with second resistance at 2.53-2.56.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY JUNE 25, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Rafter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The new plans you want to put in motion should be postponed for a few days in order to assure your getting the maximum benefit. Don't let one who has been negative in the past mess up your deal.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Conflicting with close ties and planning the future, wisely is important today. Attend a worthwhile group meeting where you can get beneficial ideas.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Plan how to be more cooperative with associates in the future and get better results. Relax and express happiness with those in your family.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Study your environment and make plans for improvement. You can easily make a fine impression on others today which will be helpful to you.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Use this day for improving conditions at home by adding more comfort. Put your talents to work with fellow associates you are around.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Communicate with associates early in the day and plan how to improve production in the future. Think constructively about proceeding on a new idea.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A fine day to study how to improve your financial status and in a most ethical fashion. Make repairs to your property which have been put off.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23) Study your appearance well and know how to improve it to your own satisfaction. Take time to engage in your favourite hobby or pastime.

SCORPIO: (October 24 to November 21) You can obtain the data you need which is difficult to get during regular workweek. Strive for increased happiness with your loved ones.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) A fine day to cultivate new acquaintances. Take steps to make your surroundings more comfortable for your family and close friends.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Show more interest in civic affairs and gain added prestige. Take health treatments and improve your appearance by exercise and diet.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Dive into some new outfit which is appealing and could be beneficial in the future. Express your talents to those in authority.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Study all the promises you have made and keep them to the best of your ability. Take no risks with money at this time or you could lose it all.

Reserve Fund

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60

Per 12 Persons For

100

J.D.

Lotus Notes

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THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen

Glasbergen

MARRIAGE COUNSELOR

"I'm not immature—I simply decided not to discontinue my childhood prematurely!"

Peanuts

I THINK SNOOPY WOULD ENJOY GETTING A LETTER FROM US.

WE DON'T KNOW HOW TO WRITE, DO WE?

NO, REMEMBER WHAT I USED TO TELL YOU?

WHAT WAS THAT?

OBEEDIENCE SCHOOL WAS A WASTE OF TIME!

Andy Capp

WHISPER WHISPER WHISPER...

I KNOW SHE'S YOUR DAUGHTER, MISSUS, BUT SHE ISN'T MADE OF MONEY!

SHE SHOUTS ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT NOT BALANCING THE BOOKS, THEN WHISPERS ABOUT BORROWING A TENNER TILL PENSION DAY.

Mutt'n'Jeff

MUTT SAVES AFTER ALL THESE YEARS IN THIS COMIC STRIP THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO STILL DON'T KNOW WHO WE ARE!

HE SAYS SOME PEOPLE CALL HIM JEFF AND THEY CALL ME MUTT! CAN YOU?

JEFF THAT'S ME!

HELLO, JEFF!

JULIUS MY TWIN BROTHER!

GET OUT OF THIS PICTURE! DO YOU WANT PEOPLE TO BECOME MORE CONFUSED ANYWAYS, EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE MY TWIN BROTHER YOU WASN'T BORN UNTIL YEARS LATER AFTER ME!

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square to form four ordinary words.

WOPHO

JEERTS

Answer here: _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: JOUST AFIRE ENCORE TOMORROW

Answer: How the podiatrist kept track of his patients — WITH FOOTNOTES

THE Daily Crossword by Kenneth White

ACROSS

1 Winter of fiction

5 George or Arle

9 Deep-blue pigment

14 Tenuis —

15 Lake — (source of the Blue Nile)

16 Purport

17 Catcher's glove

18 Smelter's need

19 Mrs. Kravend

20 Fil

23 Assassination-gate

24 Unearthed

25 Yalta participant

28 Outbuilding

30 Regret

31 Goller Palmer

34 Despatch

35 Pub measure

36 Fabricated

39 Nuremberg negative

40 Henkette State

41 Relationship in quantity

42 Arms and McMahon

43 Appends

44 Makes happen

45 Fuss

46 Maiden

47 Solved display

48 Bring upon oneself

55 Have a snail

56 To — in addition

57 To Catch A

58 Hackneyed

59 Seed covering

60 Far feature

61 Covers

62 Thoroughly

63 Factor

64 City in Ohio

DOWN

1 Branch

2 — follow-well met

3 Italian wine

4 Dwarven unit

5 Falsified

6 Seraglio

7 Once more

8 Clean

9 Made clear one's view

10 Fracas

11 Source of blue dye

12 Sties

13 Yew, e.g.

14 To Catch A

15 French river

16 French river

17 Navy's

18 Losses speed

19 Island dunes

20 Outbuildings

21 Loosen one's ties

22 Community character

23 Not barefoot

24 Semantically true

25 —'s peak (Pez Min)

26 Tasteless

27 Sports org.

28 Hawk

29 Far from

30 Frequent

31 High

32 Main area

33 57 turner

Pakistan, Philippines, edge to e, d labour...

The ILO's report, d... annual, d... called for Pa... for any adult o... labourers not... the country's b... was abolis... 1992.

and will establish nat... committees... representatives... employers' g... workers groups, to... action program... the ILO will pro... and advisory...

With the two new ac... of eight states... part in the ILO's... programme to... of child lab... plan launch... with \$30 million...

The other six count... India, Indones... Thailand and Th... ILO report also... which the... estimated inv... 200,000 and 83...

During the three-wee... national labour... Thailand has... the ILO's fig... and have yet...

Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close June 22, 1994	Tokyo Close June 23, 1994
Sterling Pound	1.5320	1.5311
Deutsche Mark	1.6054	1.6065
Swiss Franc	1.3505	1.3535
French Franc	5.4633	5.4935**
Japanese Yen	101.00	101.31
European Currency Unit	1.1950	1.1949**

(*) In US \$, (**) European Opening = 8:00 a.m. (EST)

European Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTH	6 MTH	12 MTH
U.S. Dollar	4.1200	4.3100	4.6800	5.1200
Sterling Pound	4.7500	4.9300	5.1800	5.6800
Deutsche Mark	4.7500	4.9300	5.1800	5.6800
Swiss Franc	3.9500	4.0600	4.1800	4.3700
French Franc	5.7500	5.3700	5.5000	5.6700
Japanese Yen	1.6700	1.5700	1.7200	1.5700
European Currency Unit	5.6100	5.3700	5.9300	6.1900

Source: Reuters, London, June 23, 1994. All rates are in percent.

Previous Metals

Metal	150 Oz	100 Oz	150 Oz	100 Oz
Gold	349.50	2.70	Silver	5.35

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Rate	Rate
U.S. Dollar	0.6900	0.6900
Sterling Pound	1.0500	1.0500
Deutsche Mark	0.4295	0.4310
Swiss Franc	0.5101	0.5127
French Franc	0.1250	0.1260
Japanese Yen	0.0064	0.0065
Dutch Guilder	0.5835	0.5851

Saudi Rial	0.0250	0.0250
Italian Lira	0.0000	0.0000
Belgian Franc	0.0000	0.0000

Other Currencies

Currency	Rate	Rate
Bahraini Dinar	1.8150	1.8270
Lebanese Lira	0.040495	0.041335
Saudi Riyal	0.1857	0.1845
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.5750	2.5850
Qatari Rial	0.1875	0.1885
Egyptian Pound	0.2010	0.2050
Omani Rial	1.7750	1.7590
C.A.R. Dirham	0.1875	0.1885
Greek Drachma	0.2800	0.3190
Cypriot Pound	1.5755	1.5945

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.3888/98	Canadian dollar	1.5194/24
	1.7836/46	Deutschmarks	1.7836/46
	32.78/82	Dutch guilders	32.78/82
	5.4490/40	Swiss francs	5.4490/40
	1570.01/5	Belgian francs	1570.01/5
	100.26/36	French francs	100.26/36
	7.6375/75	Italian lire	7.6375/75
	6.9220/70	Japanese yen	6.9220/70
	6.2480/30	Swedish crowns	6.2480/30
	\$1.5485/92	Norwegian crowns	\$1.5485/92
One sterling		Danish crowns	

One ounce of gold \$390.85/391.25

AFM prices slip to all-year low

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Stock prices at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) closed at an all-year low last week, reflecting a general gloom in the market over uncertainties of Jordanian-Palestinian economic cooperation and the gradual withdrawal of foreign portfolio dealers, brokers said Friday.

But the brokers expected a turn-up in the fortunes of the market this week after the meeting Wednesday between His Majesty King Hussein and U.S. President Bill Clinton produced strong indications of American economic support for the Kingdom as well as advancing the Jordanian-Israeli track of peace negotiations.

The weekly AFM report said the general share price index based on 60 major companies listed at the bourse closed at 148.95 points on Wednesday, posting a drop of nearly two points or 1.7 per cent from the previous week.

It was the first time that the index had dipped down the psychological barrier of 150 points in more than one year. The index had risen to 168 points in March, the highest this year, before going on a sharp decline starting with the Jordanian-U.S. stand-off over the siege of Aqaba. The index stood at 150.8 points at last week's opening.

Doubts cast over

Jordanian-Palestinian economic cooperation and prospects for the Jordanian dinar in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip as a result of the economic cooperation agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in April compounded the situation, leading to a steady decline in the stock prices.

Adding to the situation was a gradual withdrawal by foreign portfolio dealers from the market away towards Asian and Far Eastern markets, brokers said.

"Indications that foreign investors were coming into the AFM with nearly \$100 million in capital were behind the interest of many investors," said a broker. "They wanted to stake positions in anticipation of the foreign investors, and raised the prices. But the trend now appears to be just the opposite."

The government approved foreign investors' entry to the AFM late last year under controlled conditions and several had in fact come in. They were very conservative in getting engaged, but this was attributed to prudent policies. However, brokers said, the foreign investors were now seeing green pastures elsewhere.

According to the broker, foreign investors appeared to be more interested in Asian, Far Eastern and Central American markets where they could hope for quicker

gains. Their move was no direct reflection of the situation in the AFM despite the uncertainties, but it is now reflecting on the AFM," added the broker.

But a factor that could uplift spirits in the market was the Washington summit between King Hussein and President Clinton and strong signs that Washington would be playing a direct role in addressing some of the Kingdom's economic problems.

"An improvement could be expected this week, particularly that the Jordanian economy was the focus for the White House talks," said a broker. "Investors are hopeful that there will be a write-off of Jordanian debts to the U.S. If strong signs emerge of such an American move, then Jordanian stocks would go up."

Last week's AFM report showed that all sectors except the insurance sector suffered a beating. The index of commercial bank stock lost 0.98 per cent and closed at 162.25 points, the services sector index declined by 4.33 per cent to 136.4 points, and the industrial stock index by 0.67 points to 134.6 points.

Stocks worth JD 8.3 million changed hands during the week compared with JD 5.1 million in the previous week. The industrial sector accounts for JD 5.6 million of the week's turnover, fol-

lowed by commercial banks and financial institutions with JD 1.24 million, insurance stock with JD 600,000 and the services sector with JD 500,000.

The 62.7 per cent increase in turnover last week was mainly due to fresh stock issues by the Industrial Commercial and Agricultural Company worth JD 3.2 million and the Jordan Insurance Company worth JD 540,000.

Share of 83 companies were traded during the week, with 22 of them showing gains, 29 losing and 12 remaining stable at Wednesday's close.

It was one of the rare weeks when the insurance sector outran the services sector in turnover and also registered an upwards swing of 0.32 per cent in its index to 145.23.

Brokers said recent legislation endorsed by Parliament relaxing some of the restrictions on the insurance sector had boosted the insurance stock in the market.

"The insurance sector is seen by many as one of the key areas identified by the government in its moves towards a free market economy," said a banker with a sizeable portfolio in the market. "It seems that after two or three weeks of observation, investors think that the moves are in the right direction and hence the interest in the sector."

Pakistan, Philippines pledge to end child labour

GENEVA (R) — The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has announced a formal pledge by Pakistan and the Philippines to eliminate child labour.

The U.N. agency is waging a global campaign for national enforcement of ILO conventions against child labour and has called for workers' rights to have a bigger voice in trade.

"The aim of the cooperation will be to promote conditions to enable the government progressively to prohibit, restrict and regulate child labour with a view to its ultimate elimination," the ILO said in a statement regarding Pakistan which signed a memorandum of understanding with the ILO Tuesday.

Pakistan and the Philippines will set up national programmes to try and prevent the employment of children in hazardous work and to protect children under 12, according to the ILO.

The ILO estimates 200 million under-age people are working in mines, factories and on the streets worldwide. Industrial countries including France and the United States argue respect for workers' rights should be tied to trade privileges, but many developing states claim the interference is disguised protectionism aimed at halting their cheap exports.

Pakistan, India and Thailand are among Asian countries heavily criticised in a recent ILO report for tolerating employment of children, often in hazardous conditions.

The ILO's report, discussed at its annual assembly in Geneva, called for Pakistan to liberate any adult or child bonded labourers not freed after the country's bonded labour system was abolished in March 1992.

Each will establish national steering committees, comprising representatives from ministries, employers' groups and workers' groups, to carry out an action programme.

The ILO will provide financial and advisory services.

With the two new accords, a total of eight states are taking part in the ILO's international programme for the elimination of child labour, a five-year plan launched in 1992 with \$30 million from Germany.

The other six countries are: Brazil, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Thailand and Turkey.

The ILO report also urged Thailand to end child prostitution, which the U.N. agency estimated involved between 200,000 and 800,000 children.

During the three-week international labour conference, Thailand has challenged the ILO's figures, saying the statistics were "incomplete and have yet to be proven."

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Bosnian Muslim commander urges offensive against Serbs

SARAJEVO (R) — The commander of the Bosnian government army urged the country's new Muslim-Croat federation to go on the offensive against rebel Serbs, Sarajevo's leading newspaper reported Friday.

"I want to go to a joint (Muslim-Croat) fight to liberate the joint state," Olobođenje quoted General Rasim Delic as telling officers at a conference in the Bosnian capital Thursday.

"So far we have been conducting a defensive war, now we are going into phase two, a war of liberation. It means our soldiers have to overcome that psychological barrier, to get out of the trench and move."

Gen. Delic's comments, reported only hours before the Muslim-led government army was due to sign a de-escalation agreement with Croat militia, struck a discordant note with a Bosnia-wide truce signed in Geneva this month.

The Muslim-Croat accord, to be signed under U.N. auspices Friday in the central Bosnian town of Gorzija Vakuf, formalises a truce agreed in March when the new allies ended a year of bitter fighting and signed the federation agreement.

It will also allow the Muslims to bring more forces to bear against their remaining enemy, the Bosnian Serbs.

The Geneva ceasefire agreement — intended to pave the way for international efforts to halt the 26-month-old war — was

violated in northern and central Bosnia, U.N. Protection Force spokesman Major Rob Annink said Friday.

He also said U.N. peacekeepers were forced to call in air support for the first time in weeks.

Maj. Annink pinned most of the blame for truce violations on Muslim troops.

"I would say the BiH (Muslim-led government army) is doing more of the attacking, perhaps challenging the BSA (Bosnian Serb Army) to retaliate."

Muslim forces fired 10 tank shells into the centre of Serb-held Doboj Friday, causing extensive damage, a Reuters television crew said.

Bosnian Serb radio reported that six people were wounded in the shelling.

Maj. Annink said U.N. peacekeepers escorting an aid convoy on Thursday near Teocak, in central Bosnia, came under mortar and machine-gun fire from Serbs and issued their first call for air support since the Geneva truce went into effect on June 10.

NATO aircraft dropped warning flares in response. The U.N. spokesman said there were no casualties or damage in what he said was a deliberate Serb attack.

The breakaway enclave of Bihac, in the northwest, appeared calm Friday for the second day running after government troops made significant gains at the expense of Muslim rebels led by maverick tycoon Fikret Abdic.

In Washington, defence officials of NATO allies with troops in former Yugoslavia warned the Senate that dire consequences would follow if the United States unilaterally lifted the arms embargo against Bosnia.

The officials from Britain, France, Spain and Denmark testified to the Senate Armed Services Committee as the full Senate prepared to debate a proposal to force President Bill Clinton to lift the United Nations-mandated arms ban.

The Senate has already voted in favour of lifting the ban so that Bosnian Muslims can defend themselves against Serb attacks, but it has left unclear whether the United States should act alone.

The House of Representatives has come out in favour of unilateral action.

"We believe that the lifting of the arms embargo would have the effect of pouring gasoline on fire and mean an all-out war," said Danish Undersecretary for Defence Anders Troldborg.

The United States, Russia and European powers are expected at a July 9-10 economic summit in Italy to endorse a plan dividing Bosnia along ethnic lines with penalties if the combatants refuse to cooperate.

The plan gives 51 per cent of Bosnia to Muslims and Croats and 49 per cent to Serbs, who now control about 72 per cent and are reluctant to yield so much territory.

Meanwhile, the Washington Times said Friday Bosnia is getting Iranian arms shipped through Croatia "with tacit approval" of the Clinton administration that publicly opposes unilaterally lifting the arms embargo.

The newspaper said "Croatia has become a major transit point for covert Iranian arms shipments to Bosnia with the tacit approval of the Clinton administration..." quoting intelligence sources.

In its report, the paper quoted a senior U.S. official that "there is no U.S. support for what Iran is doing."

But the paper said intelligence sources have reported the U.S. closely monitors Iran and halted an arms shipment to Bosnia last September but that the U.S. has not protested Iranian shipments of arms to Bosnia through Croatia. The paper said such shipments have increased since March.

"The lack of protests caused the Croatians to assume the administration has 'winked' at the arms shipments," the paper said, quoting an unnamed source.

Bosnian Vice President Ejup Ganic pleaded for the embargo to be lifted "to create conditions for peace and for negotiations through balance in weaponry."

He voiced little concern about warnings that lifting the embargo would result in the departure of U.N. forces, saying their role had been overstated.



Supporters of opposition leader Moshood Ahlola, who unofficially won last June's annual Nigerian presidential poll, run in Lagos' streets as Mr. Ahlola addresses the crowd in a show of defiance to the military regime. Nigerian police arrested Mr. Ahlola at his Lagos home (AFP photo)

Troops tighten security in Lagos

LAGOS (R) — Nigerian police and troops stepped up security in Lagos Friday for a visit by military ruler General Sani Abacha following the arrest of opposition leader Moshood Ahlola.

Gen. Abacha, who seized power in November, was expected to visit military establishments to explain his government's handling of Nigeria's political crisis and its political programme.

Armed police were stationed at key points of the sprawling city and troops guarded the area around Dodan Barracks, the former offices and residence of Nigeria's head of state.

"The police are out in force here. There are three armoured cars patrolling Yaba and Maryland," a student leader said.

Hundreds of demonstrators, many of them youths, marched in central Lagos Thursday night demanding Mr. Ahlola's release.

The demonstrators included Mr. Ahlola's chief wife, Kudirat.

Mr. Ahlola, who is widely believed to have won an annulled presidential election in June 1993, was arrested Thursday. He was wanted for treason since proclaiming himself president on June 11 in a direct challenge to the military government.

Gen. Abacha plans to hold a constitutional conference in

the inland capital Abuja from Monday to write a new charter.

The government Friday named 96 people, many of them former politicians and officials to participate in the conference. They join some 273 conference delegates elected last month in a poll boycotted heavily in the southwest.

Government nominees are from each of Nigeria's 30 states and the federal territory of Abuja and include representatives of traditional rulers but not the pro-democracy movements.

According to the government, political activity will be allowed in January when a hand-over date will be announced.

Also Friday, Nigerian police fired tear gas to disperse Lagos market women protesting against the arrest of opposition leader Moshood Ahlola, the opposition said.

"Over 1,000 market women marched in central Lagos this morning but they were dispersed by police tear gas," said Segun Jegede, an official of the Campaign for Democracy (CD).

Residents in Lagos' Ikeja district reported a separate protest involving hundreds of pro-Ahlola supporters, who were marching along streets.

Many face treason charges, including former senior politicians. Mr. Ahlola could face similar charges for which the punishment is life imprisonment.

Soldiers have ruled Nigeria for most of the time since independence from Britain in 1960.

Gen. Abacha plans to hold a constitutional conference in

Spring: compromise vital over N. Ireland

CORFU, Greece (R) — Britain and Ireland have to make constitutional compromises to achieve a breakthrough in the Northern Ireland conflict, Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring said Friday.

He also welcomed "a great deal of deliberation and consideration" by Irish Republican Army (IRA) guerrillas of an Anglo-Irish peace plan that warned the IRA a temporary ceasefire was not the path to permanent peace.

Mr. Spring, speaking in advance of a meeting at the European Union summit between British Prime Minister John Major and Irish leader Albert Reynolds, said: "Both sides have to make compromises if we are going to make progress." Both leaders are to hold a full-scale summit at the end of July which could hopefully produce the framework for a comprehensive peace formula.

Mr. Spring told BBC Radio: "It is a very tight deadline that we will be doing our best."

The agreement could include dropping the constitutional claim to Northern Ireland and Britain might change the Government of Ireland Act which gives it authority over the province where more than 3,000 have been killed since 1969 in the Irish Republican Army guerrilla campaign.

Mr. Spring said: "Both governments accept there has to be a constitutional balance but obviously what we want to get is a formulation that is acceptable to both communities in Northern Ireland."

Last December Britain and Ireland signed a joint peace declaration that sought to allay the fears of the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland and the Catholic minority which aspires to Irish unity.

Sinn Féin, the IRA's political wing, has promised to give its response shortly on the Anglo-Irish peace declaration after months of prevarication.

Extremists from both sides of the sectarian divide have plunged into the political vacuum. Last weekend six Catholics were gunned down and killed in a Northern Ireland pub by Protestant extremists.

Mr. Spring said: "I hope Sinn Féin/IRA can remove themselves from the violence and announce a permanent cessation of violence and I think it has to be clear and unequivocal if we are going to end the conflict."

British officials were careful not to heighten expectations before the Reynolds-Major meeting. "There is still ground to be covered," one senior official said.

Anti-corruption campaigner leads in Belarus elections

MINSK (R) — Radical anti-corruption crusader Alexander Lukashenko opened a big lead in the first round of the Belarus presidential election, unexpectedly pushing conservative Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich into a distant second place.

An electoral official said Friday that according to preliminary figures Mr. Lukashenko, who has pledged to oust bribe-takers from government of the former Soviet republic, won 45.1 per cent of the vote.

Mr. Kebich, who focused his campaign on a proposed monetary union with Russia and led in pre-election opinion polls, was far back in second place with 17.4 per cent.

If the figures are confirmed the two men will go through to a second round in two weeks. Fifty per cent was required for outright victory.

In third place was nationalist Zenon Pozniak, who polled a surprising 12.9 per cent. Stanislaw Shushkevich, Belarus's first head of state and standard-bearer of liberal hopes, was fourth with 9.9 per cent.

The flamboyant Lukashenko, who drew huge crowds with accusations of high-level abuses, appeared to benefit from a wave of despair and revulsion over plunging living standards more than two years after independence.

"My first move as president will be to stop inflation and price rises," Mr. Lukashenko told a cheering crowd at a rally in the final week of campaigning.

"My second step will be to put an end to corruption and extinguish the mafia occupy-

ing all government offices."

He alleged during the campaign that unknown assailants had opened fire on his car and that he had been followed and his telephone tapped.

Mr. Kebich, 58 and prime minister since 1990, has advocated cautious reform. Belarus has made far less progress at introducing reforms than Russia or even neighbouring Ukraine.

He emphasised his commitment to the monetary union by holding talks in the Kremlin with Russian President Boris Yeltsin on the eve of the vote and announcing that Moscow had eased the terms of the pact.

Mr. Lukashenko proposed little in terms of an economic programme but that did not seem to matter much to voters. Like Mr. Kebich, he called for closer ties with Russia in a country with little national identity in the post-Soviet era.

But the 39-year-old moustached anti-corruption campaigner proved far more appealing than the uncharismatic and dour prime minister.

"Be wise," Mr. Lukashenko told voters last week. "Enjoy the government's presents but vote for the man who will make your life better."

Much will depend on how the losers in Thursday's first round mobilise their supporters to vote in the decisive ballot.

Two arch-conservative candidates who finished at the bottom of the race may have robbed Mr. Kebich of some votes and will almost certainly now throw their support behind him.

U.K., China fail again to end Hong Kong airport row

HONG KONG (R) — Britain and China came tantalisingly close Friday to ending a two-year row with China over funding Hong Kong's new airport, but the elusive deal has still not been struck.

In what had been billed as a make-or-break negotiating round, the Sino-British Airport Committee decided to charge experts from both sides to draft an agreement on funding the Hong Kong dollars 158 billion (\$20.3-billion) project.

Chief British negotiator Hugh Davies said he hoped the final agreement would be struck in the next few days.

"We will reach an agreement on the basis of the progress we have made," he said. "I hope we will reach agreement before the end of this month, if possible within the next few days."

But he said hurdles remain on the issue despite Chinese promises to be more flexible in the talks, the first test of whether relations on Hong Kong are really thawing.

Chinese team leader Guo Fengmin said: "We have decided to entrust the experts to draw up a draft agreement of the important points for representatives of the two sides to sign, making an agreement between the two sides."

The new airport has been a source of Sino-British friction since then-governor David Wilson announced the project, without consulting China, in 1989 as a confidence-booster after the June 4 massacre of pro-democracy students in Beijing.

The project, which includes a rail link, two cross-harbour tunnels, major land reclamation and one of the world's biggest suspension bridges, then fell victim to the Sino-British row over Governor Chris Patten's democratic reforms in 1992.

U.S. agencies support chemical arms ban

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States said Thursday there is growing evidence Russia is continuing to develop advanced chemical weapons and Moscow is failing to fulfil a promise to disclose full details of its programme.

Despite this, the State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Pentagon strongly pressed the Senate to ratify a treaty banning such arms.

Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, CIA Director James Woolsey cited "growing evidence that Russia has continued elements of an offensive programme."

In particular he cited recent comments by Russian scientist Val Mirzayanov that Russia was continuing to develop chemical agents and binary weapons. "The Mirzayanov allegations have provided many fruitful leads to pursue in both intelligence and diplomatic channels," he said.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Shalikashvili, also backed ratifying the treaty at a hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee examining the issue.

Anti-drug agents say the Cali drug cartel, dominated by the fugitive Rodriguez Orejuela brothers, had taken over most of the trafficking out of Colombia long before Mr. Escobar's death and has since consolidated its power.

Unlike Mr. Escobar, who shot anyone who got in his way, the Rodriguez Orejuelas have a different style. Operating quietly, avoiding terrorism and trying hard to look like ordinary businessmen, they bribe and persuade rather than bomb and kill.

Just how far their influence stretches over Colombian life became evident with the publication of a cassette tape showing how the Rodriguez brothers offered \$3.5 million to the campaign of President-elect Ernesto Samper.

Mr. Samper, who narrowly

Berlusconi names spokesman to end ministerial contradictions

ROME (AFP) — The Italian prime minister has appointed Giuliano Ferrara as government spokesman in an attempt to end the flow of contradictory comments made by his ministers over how to cut the public deficit.

Mr. Ferrara, a former journalist who was a long-time supporter of the Socialists, will be "the voice of the government in its collegiality," the daily La Stampa commented Friday.

Silvio Berlusconi's decision came at the end of the week in which ministers made all sorts of vague and usually contradictory statements about how the government would bring the deficit, which is already close to 160 trillion lira down at least to the year's target of 154 trillion lira (about \$100 billion).

Added to the deficit is the 32.5 trillion hole which appeared last week in the

accounts of the Istituto Nazionale della Previdenza Sociale (INPS), Italy's social security.

"I formally deny that the government has ever spoken of reappraising the budget, of austerity measures, of a moratorium or of raising taxes on cigarettes and petrol," said Mr. Berlusconi at the end of Thursday's cabinet meeting.

All these suggestions had been made by ministers. Treasury Minister Lamberto Dini said last Friday that any budgetary reappraisal would have to be "substantial."

Three days later Budget Minister Giancarlo Pajiani publicly suggested a rise in indirect tax on cigarettes and petrol.

Transport Minister Publio Fiori added that he had a plan "to resolve the most immediate problems" with a 50 trillion lira injection into

state coffers "without cutting spending or introducing new taxes." However, not a single detail of the plan was revealed.

Industry Minister Vito Gnutti then warned Italians that they would "all be hit with austerity measures," while Mr. Berlusconi's Forza Italia had given the impression during its electoral campaign that "austerity can be accompanied by tax cuts."

Gianni Letta, under-secretary to the premier and very close to Mr. Berlusconi, then said measures would be announced "before the holidays."

On Thursday Mr. Berlusconi had had enough. "We are seeking means of intervention which will be the fruit of our imaginations and not the result of old recipes cooked up by previous governments," he said. He gave no further details.

Philippine film awards row after envelopes switch

MANILA (R) — The Philippine film industry was engulfed in controversy Friday when two of the country's most popular stars refused to return best-actor awards after the winning envelopes were apparently switched. Police were ordered to investigate how the envelopes contained the names of the wrong winners of the best actor and actress awards at the Manila Film Festival Wednesday night.

"We are gathering evidence against whoever are the culprits and we will file charges," Police Major Carlos Baltazar said. The row erupted during the televised awards ceremony when actor Gahby Concepcion was named best actor and Rufa Gutierrez best actress for her role in a local dramatisation of the Korean Bobbit affair.

The official result of the judges' vote prepared by a prestigious Manila accountancy firm showed the real winners were actor Aiko Melendez and actress Aiko Melendez. Told by shocked accountants of the apparent switch, Manila's mayor and festival organiser Alfredo Lim ordered a police probe Thursday and demanded Concepcion and Gutierrez return the trophies. The pair refused. Co-presenter Virella Bahague, who represented Mauritius at last month's Miss Universe contest in Manila and announced Gutierrez as winner, was also under investigation. "If Miss Mauritius is involved, we will report her," Mr. Baltazar said. Ms. Gutierrez, who came third in the 1993 Miss World pageant in South Africa, was dragged into a controversy last year after a senator alleged that local actresses had accepted money for sex with members of the Brunei royalty. She denied involvement.

Government nominees are from each of Nigeria's 30 states and the federal territory of Abuja and include representatives of traditional rulers but not the pro-democracy movements.

According to the government, political activity will be allowed in January when a hand-over date will be announced.

Also Friday, Nigerian police fired tear gas to disperse Lagos market women protesting against the arrest of opposition leader Moshood Ahlola, the opposition said.

Many face treason charges, including former senior politicians. Mr. Ahlola could face similar charges for which the punishment is life imprisonment.

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the inland capital Abuja from Monday to write a new charter.

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He amplified his thoughts at the news conference: "It was precisely this man, Lenin, who left the deepest scar on the forehead of Russian history."

Italy overcome loss of Baggio, Baresi, Pagliuca to defeat Norway 1-0

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — Italy overcame the loss of its offensive and defensive stars, its starting goalkeeper and a one-man disadvantage to beat Norway 1-0 Thursday in the first round of the World Cup.

Dino Baggio's header from 7 metres on Giuseppe Signorini's 69th-minute free kick gave Italy three desperately needed points following its opening 1-0 loss to Ireland.

The result left Ireland, Italy and Norway tied atop Group E with three points each.

The victory not only was a boost to Italy's chances to reach the second round but also the team's confidence, after having to play a man short from the 22nd minute when goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca was ejected for a handball outside the penalty area.

"Our players have been great," said Sacchi, who ran off the bench when Baggio scored. "Now we must think of Mexico, because we have many injured players. We must win against Mexico now."

Italy faces Mexico Tuesday in Washington. Pagliuca came way off his line to thwart Norwegian midfielder Oyvind Leonhardsen, who had broken in alone against the keeper in the 22nd minute.

Pagliuca, an eight-year veteran of Italian first-division club Sampdoria and making his 20th appearance for the Italian national team, made a sliding block of Leonhardsen's shot in the penalty arc. But he used his head to block the ball and then knocked down Leonhardsen to bring out the red card from German referee Hellmut Krug.

Italian coach Arrigo Sacchi removed Roberto Baggio, who has been suffering from an inflamed achilles tendon, and sent in reserve keeper Luca Marchegiani to replace Pagliuca.

"I was really sorry to decide the substitution of Roberto Baggio, but I needed players who could run a lot and I didn't want to exhaust him in such hard

work," Sacchi said.

The one-man advantage appeared to do little for Norway's offense, getting only a few chances in the later stages of the first half.

"I was very disappointed with the performance of the team," Norwegian coach Egil Olsen said. "We gave the ball away a number of times on our own half, and other times we didn't give the ball away but it ended up being a free kick."

Italy had dominated the play until Pagliuca's expulsion, getting its best chance in the 14th minute when Nicola Bertoni sent in a header off a corner kick that required Norwegian keeper Erik Thorstvedt to make a diving block on at the right post.

Italy was further hampered when sweeper Franco Baresi left the game in the 48th minute limping with a

sprained knee, and was replaced by Luigi Apolloni, who was making only his second appearance for the Azzurri.

Italy pressed from the second-half kickoff and it finally paid off after Signorini was pulled down on the left side outside the penalty area.

He bent a cross into the area, where Dino Baggio was able to head it over a flat-footed Thorstvedt.

"All I can see is that header," Thorstvedt said. "I don't even know who scored. There were an incredible number of free kicks from that area."

"I am incredibly disappointed. This was a unique chance. We should have at least had a draw. It was almost embarrassing to lose a game like this. So we just have to calm down and look at we did."



Italian player Dino Baggio (C) is congratulated by teammates Daniele Massaro (L) and Nicola Bertoni after he scored Italy's goal against Norway to give them a 1-0 victory (AFP photo)

Bolivia, S. Korea tie

FOXBORO, Mass. (AP) — Bolivia and South Korea played to a 0-0 draw Thursday in a Group C game, leaving both teams winless in World Cup finals.

In the 1994 tournament's first scoreless draw, South Korea had two late scoring chances denied and Bolivian left defender Luis Cristaldo was ejected seven minutes from time.

Bolivia mostly had the better of play, but sloppy finishing and South Korea's disciplined defense kept it scoreless. In punishing end-to-end play, South Korea's speedy forwards used counterattacks to try to force mistakes in Bolivia's shaky defense.

Bolivia was missing striker Marco Etcheverry, starting a two-game suspension after being sent off for a kick at Lothar Matthaus in a 1-0 opening loss to Germany.

South Korea, in its fourth World Cup finals appearance, retained chances of advancing to the second round despite failing to win its easiest game. The Koreans face Germany in their last first-round game Monday.

Thursday's game left Germany atop the group with four points. Spain and South Korea both have two. Bolivia one.

Bolivia, which also was at the 1950 tournament, remained scoreless in World Cup finals.

Before a crowd of 56,456 at Foxboro Stadium, Bolivia threatened in the 18th minute as Cristaldo floated a cross from left that Julio Baldivieso

headed just wide of the Korean goal.

The two mainstay players will be missing in the final group game against Spain — Cristaldo with an automatic suspension after being sent off and Baldivieso for collecting his second caution of the tournament in Thursday's game.

Bolivia's Erwin Sanchez came closest in the first half when he drilled a free kick from the edge of the penalty area at the near goal corner, forcing South Korean keeper and captain Choi In Young into a standstill save.

A Bolivian defensive slip forced keeper Carlos Trucco into an excursion through the penalty area to run down Kim Joo Sung but when the ball went loose, Hwang nailed a shot high and wide.

Hwang Sun Hong shook off a defender in the 35th minute to set up a clear straight-ahead shot at the Bolivian goal, but the ball sailed high over the crossbar.

A minute later, Trucco nearly sent a ricochet into his own goal when Kim Joo Sung blocked his kick out of the penalty area.

Seo Jung Won was on target for the Koreans with a 50th-minute low volley off a loose bouncer but Trucco dived to turn it around the near post.

Hwang could have put it away for South Korea at 81 minutes when he stepped ahead of Miguel Rimba in the penalty area, but his point-blank shot was smothered by a diving Trucco.



CHEERING CROWDS: Fans of the U.S. national soccer team cheer prior to the start of the World Cup game between the U.S. and Switzerland Wednesday at Pasadena's Rose Bowl. The U.S. beat Colombia 2-1. Below, the match 4-1 (AFP photos)



Americans discover soccer

DANA POINT, Calif. (AP) — After 78 years of obscurity, soccer in the United States was hot Thursday.

All day long, the telephones kept ringing at the Dana Point Resort. Television stations wanted Tony and Tab, Alexi and Cobi.

Wednesday night's 2-1 upset of Colombia put U.S. soccer player's names in the news, and possibly ensured the World Cup will be a success.

"Maybe 10 years from now they're going to talk about whether the U.S. is going to win the World Cup," goalkeeper Tony Meola said.

It might have been the most important win in the history of U.S. soccer. The United States won a World Cup game for the first time since 1950 and is almost certain to advance past the opening round for the first time since 1930. About 2.7 million homes were tuned in to the ESPN cable channel that carried the game with English language commentary, and there may be a record U.S. television audi-

ence for soccer when the Americans play Romania Sunday in their final-round game.

"We've seen people on the freeways with their windows painted 'USA 2, Colombia 1,' things we've never seen before," defender Paul Caligiuri said.

For so many years, they'd been regarded as those guys playing that foreign sport. As recently as May 7, a game against Estonia at Cal State-Fullerton drew just 2,158.

But now, it's sort of like

the Olympic ice hockey team in 1980. U.S. sports fans who knew almost nothing about soccer are starting to rally around the flag. It may not be as overwhelming as it was for hockey, but it's starting to happen.

"That was inspiring, what they did. The Mike Ernziones, the Jim Craigs, athletes who normally don't get attention," Caligiuri said, recalling two stars of the 1980 Olympic ice hockey team. "I think that's happening for ourselves, too."

World Cup fever claims 2nd victim

BANGKOK (AFP) — A World Cup-crazy Thai committed suicide after losing a 10,000-baht (\$400) bet that the Netherlands would beat Saudi Arabia by at least two goals.

Sayan Jandee, 26, hanged himself after his favourite could only manage a 2-1 win.

"Goodbye, my darling,"

he said in a farewell note to his wife. "Please take care of our little daughter. We will meet again in another life."

Last weekend, a cafe owner in Macau dropped dead from exhaustion after watching the World Cup on television for two nights running, followed by work throughout the next day without sleep.

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ANNOUNCEMENT ISSUED BY

Jordan University of Science & Technology

Tender No. (27/94)

Jordan University of Science & Technology has pleasure in inviting Local Consultants and International Consultants in Joint-venture with Local Consultants to submit their applications and their technical and financial offers for the Consulting and Supervision of the Construction of the King Abdullah Hospital Project. Application forms can be obtained from the Secretary of the Tendering Committee during working hours (Saturday-Wednesday) starting Saturday June 25, 1994 till Saturday July 9, 1994 at a non-refundable fee of JD100 (One Hundred Jordanian Dinars).

Submission of the documents should be in accordance with the following conditions:

1. Tender proposals should be submitted by hand to the Chairman of the Central Tendering Committee not later than 12:00 noon, Saturday July 23, 1994.
2. Each tender shall be accompanied by tender bond in favour of the Jordan University of Science and Technology drawn from or approved by an accredited bank in Jordan in an amount not less than two per cent (2%) of the total tender sum. Such bond shall remain valid for a period of not less than three months from the closing date of the Tender Submission.
3. Tender proposals not abiding by the above-mentioned conditions and the conditions mentioned in the Tender Documents will not be considered.

Chairman, Tendering Committee, Univ. Secretary General, Dr. H. Dweiry.

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In celebration of Canada Day, Canadian citizens in Jordan are invited to attend a picnic which will be held on Friday, July 1st, from 5 to 8 p.m. in the Yajuz area. Activities will include a barbecue, live music and door prizes. Canadians interested in attending should bring proof of citizenship to the Embassy to obtain free entrance tickets, a map and information sheet. The Embassy will not provide transportation.

Fête du Canada

A l'occasion de la Fête du Canada, les Canadiennes et les Canadiens résidents en Jordanie sont cordialement invités à un pique-nique qui aura lieu vendredi le premier juillet à Yajuz de 17h00 à 20h00. Il y aura pour cette occasion un barbecue, de la musique et des prix. Les Canadiens désirant participer sont priés de se présenter à l'ambassade avec preuve de citoyenneté pour obtenir un carton d'entrée, un plan et un feuillet de renseignements. L'ambassade ne fournit pas le transport au site.

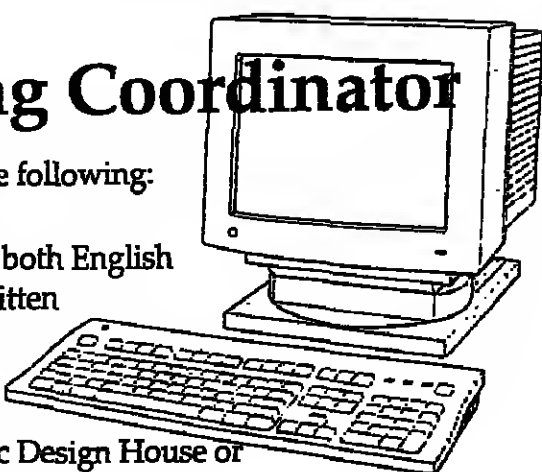
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مكتبة من الكتب

Argentina aim to exorcise ghost of Cameroon in their Nigeria match

FOXBORO, Massachusetts (R) — Argentina's reborn World Cup side look well enough equipped to overcome the Cameroon syndrome when they meet Nigeria in a Group D match Saturday — a clash between the champions of South America and Africa.

But they will need to show the same craft and guile as they did in the 4-0 rout of Greece Tuesday to counter the rapid thrusts of Nigeria's pacy attack spearheaded by the tall Rashidi Yekini.

Twice champions Argentina have unhappy memories of their last World Cup clash with an African side when Cameroon upset them 1-0 in the opening match of the 1990 finals in Italy.

Coach Alfio Basile, reminded the Nigeria's forwards are in some ways similar to Colombia's who ran rings round his defence in a 5-0 qualifying rout last year, said Argentina would not alter their game.

Basile said: "We won't put a man on Yekini. I'm not going to change. Every time

people mention the match against Colombia I tell them that I would play them the same way again."

But Argentina have made a significant improvement since the debacle in Buenos Aires and also shrugged off the unpopular defensive shackles of the 1990 World Cup.

Their strikers Gabriel Batistuta, hat-trick scorer against Greece, and Claudio Caniggia — playing with a painful, bruised toe — can match, if not better Yekini and fellow striker Finidi George for speed and finishing.

Nigeria's Dutch coach Clements Westerhof said Yekini, who scored in the Africans' 3-0 victory over Bulgaria in Dallas Tuesday, should have had three.

"You have not seen the real Super Eagles yet," he said.

The key for Argentina lies in midfield where Basile will be looking for rising stars Fernando Redondo and Diego Simeone to found a solid base and dictate the



Today's matches

Group F: Belgium vs The Netherlands in Orlando at 19:30 Amman time.
Group F: Saudi Arabia vs. Morocco in New York at 19:30 Amman time.
Group D: Argentina vs. Nigeria in Boston at 23:00 Amman time.

Redondo, who will be playing his club football for Real Madrid next season, said: "Argentina have more options in attack."

Nigeria snatched the initiative from Bulgaria after the Europeans had failed to capitalise on a dominant start.

Westerhof did not feel the need to man-mark Bulgaria's Barcelona star Hristo Stoichkov, who he did not consider so much of a danger on the ball. But he will not give Argentina's captain Diego Maradona, at 33, still unmatched as a ball player, the same room.

Hinting that attacking midfielder Augustin Okocha of Eintracht Frankfurt might be given the man-to-man task, Westerhof said: "You don't put a woodpecker on Maradona, you put a star on a star."

Okocha, who is nursing a minor knee injury, said he was not sure whether he would play, but that if he did "Maradona will also have to mark me. I'll play when I have the ball."

Belgium, Netherlands vie for Group F supremacy

ORLANDO (R) — Belgium and the Netherlands, given a fright by less-fancied opposition in their opening Group F matches, battle for early assurance of a second round World Cup place Saturday.

Belgium scraped through 1-0 against Morocco in Orlando in their first game and the Dutch came from behind to grab a late 2-1 win over Saudi Arabia in Washington.

It was a chastening experience for both, particularly the Dutch who were caught cold by a 19th minute Saudi strike before Wim Jonk hauled them back with a goal after the interval and substitute Gaston Taument headed the winner three minutes from the end.

"I feel we should thank them for what they did," Dutch striker Dennis Bergkamp said. "They woke us up. We were asleep in that game until the second half and I think it has done us some good."

Taument may well get his chance on the right wing in the starting line-up against Belgium in preference to Marc Overmars, the player he replaced in the second half last Monday.

Belgium team chief Paul van Hinst envisages a change in his formation to meet the threat he knows he can expect the Dutch to pose down the wings and to shore up deficiencies exposed by the lively Moroccans in midfield.

Central defender Philippe Albert, who missed the Morocco match because of suspension, looks sure to return — and for this clash at least — the attack will almost certainly be reduced from three strikers to two.

Luc Nilis is likely to stand

down, leaving Sunday's goalscorer Marc Degryse and Croatian-born Josip Weber, five-goal hero on his Belgian debut against Zambia earlier this month, up front.

Apart from a goalless draw in a 1987 friendly, Belgium and the Netherlands have not met since two World Cup qualifiers in late 1985.

Each won one but the Belgians went through to the 1986 final tournament in Mexico where they reached the semifinals before falling to eventual champions Argentina.

Dutch coach Dick Advocaat played down the rivalry between the two teams.

"It is not extra motivation to us that it is Belgium and they played them," he said. "You don't need any motivation when you are playing in the World Cup."

"They have a different style from us. They play on the counter-attack but we always play full-out attack."

Belgium will hope Weber can exploit any holes in the Dutch defence with his sharp predatory instinct.

Manager van Hinst — a fine international marksman in his day — said after the Saudi match that Dutch veteran Ronald Koeman was a very good player but had been a little slow getting back.

Belgium are the seeded team in the Group but van Hinst mischievously told Dutch journalists his side would be the underdogs Saturday.

"Holland are going to play Brazil in the final, as you've all been saying. Of course we're the underdogs," he joked at the team base in Daytona beach Thursday.

McNeil advances; Edberg conqueror out of Wimbledon

WIMBLEDON, England (AP) — Lori McNeil, the surprise conqueror of Steffi Graf, reached Wimbledon's fourth round with a solid victory Friday. But another giantkiller, Kenneth Carlsen, fell ill and withdrew a day after upsetting Stefan Edberg.

McNeil, in her best Wimbledon since 1989, defeated Kristie Boogert of the Netherlands, 6-2, 6-4.

Carlsen, a Dane ranked 113th in the world, began vomiting during his third-round match with Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden and withdrew while trailing 6-4, 6-4, 1-0. Carlsen stunned Edberg, a two-time champion, in five sets Thursday.

In other matches Friday, No. 10 seed Michael Chang defeated Grant Connell of

Canada, 7-6 (7-4), 6-4, 6-2, and South African Wayne Ferreira beat Chris Wilkinson, one of two Britons still left in the tournament, 6-2, 6-3.

McNeil was joined the fourth round by fellow American Lindsay Davenport, the no. 9 seed who turned 18 this month. Playing in only her second Wimbledon, Davenport beat Barbara Rittner of Germany, 6-4, 3-6, 6-1.

An American playing her 14th Wimbledon, 32-year-old Pam Shriver, ran out steam in her match, losing to Argentina's Florencia Labat, 6-4, 4-6, 6-2. Labat will play McNeil in the fourth round.

Larisa Neiland of Latvia defeated No. 6 seed Kimiko Date of Japan, 6-3, 6-2, but it was scarcely an upset. Neiland has reached the fourth round

here once before, in 1988, while Date is weak on grass, losing by the second round in her four previous Wimbledon.

No. 14 seed Amanda Coster of South Africa won 6-4, 6-3 over American Ginger Helgeson. And Kristine Radford of Australia reached her first Grand Slam fourth round the easy way when Argentina's Ines Gorrochategui pulled out of their third-round match because of injury.

The battle for the women's title has been thrown wide open following the first-round ouster of top seed and defending champion Steffi Graf.

No. 2 seed Arantza Sanchez Vicario was installed as the odds-makers' favourite,

Morocco aim to make up for unlucky defeat

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey (R) — Morocco, unlucky losers against Belgium in their opening World Cup Group F match, need to beat Saudi Arabia convincingly Saturday to boost their chances of reaching the last 16.

Appearing in their third World Cup finals, Morocco were encouraged by that performance against Belgium in which only the heroics of opposition goalkeeper Michel Preud'homme deprived them of deserved point.

Their plan is now to take three points from the Saudis and hope that a point against the Dutch in their last match June 29 will be enough to put them into the second round.

"We must play an attacking game on Saturday. We must be aggressive," said Rachid Daoudi, the gifted midfielder who had an impressive game against Belgium.

The Saudis, in their first finals, can also take a great deal of comfort from their opening game, which ended in a 2-1 defeat by the Netherlands.

The 500-1 outsiders rocked the former European champions, taking the lead through a goal by Fuad Anwar Amin, and only a goalkeeping blunder by the previously excellent Mohammad Al Deayea five minutes from time cost them a point.

Moroccan goalkeeper Khalil Azmi was carried on a stretcher in the closing minutes of the match with Belgium but is expected to be fit. He and Saudi opposite number Al Deayea should have a busy afternoon Saturday with a draw of no use to either team.

The main Moroccan strike threat is provided by the experienced Mohammad Chaouch, who plays his club soccer with Nice in the French second division. Chaouch twice rattled the Belgian crossbar in Orlando last Sunday.

Saudi Arabia look to Majed Abdullah to find the back of the net — the man called the "Desert Pele" is credited with no less than 118 goals in 167 appearances for his country, including friendly matches.

Morocco met Saudi Arabia in the opening phases of the 1984 Olympic soccer tournament in Los Angeles, the Moroccans winning that encounter 1-0 but failing to reach the next round.

They fared better in the 1986 World Cup in Mexico, holding Poland and England to draws before beating Portugal 3-1 to reach the second round where they went down 1-0 to eventual runners-up West Germany.

That run remains the best-ever showing by an Arab nation at the World Cup.

NBA champions Houston make it safe for scoring

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Rockets made the NBA safe again for scoring. They vanquished the villainous New York Knicks, who had taken the thrills and the points out of basketball.

The Knicks, more concerned about success than style, were criticised for their hard-hitting defensive approach that was not pretty. It was simply effective and it best fit their skills.

It almost took them to the top of the NBA. They made it to the seventh game of the finals Wednesday night but lost to the Rockets 90-84 in the lowest scoring seven-game playoff series since the shot clock was introduced in 1954.

The Knicks were merely doing what the other 26 NBA teams try to do, keep the opponent from scoring. It is just that the Knicks did it better than any of those teams for each of the past two seasons.

In their 25 playoff games, they allowed an average of 87.7 points per game. The Rockets managed just 86.1 points, the lowest finals average ever even though they

won. "The fact that we're unwanted and unloved and the fact that people say we don't deserve to be in the finals because of our style makes us play even harder," Riley said. "But the finals are not about style, they're about winning."

The Rockets weren't so different. They could play physically, too. In the finals, New York had only 21 more rebounds and scored just 86.9 points per game. Houston matched the Knicks intensity down the stretch, with all games being decided in the last three minutes.

"It seemed like it was a boxing match," Houston coach Rudy Tomjanovich said. "You take a couple of steps back and then you come back at them."

"I think we felt very comfortable out there on the floor" in the fourth quarter Wednesday, Houston forward Otis Thorpe said. "We knew we had 12 minutes to go and it was just a matter of going out there and executing and just playing some de-

fence." There's that word again. Defence.

The Knicks allowed fewer than 95 points in 24 of 25 playoff games. Houston kept its last 13 opponents under 100.

It has become commonplace in the playoffs, when games mean more and players work harder. Both teams scored more than 110 points in only four of this year's 77 playoff games. "It happened only twice the year before."

Hakeem Olajuwon was Houston's star, winning the series MVP award after getting 25 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists in game 7. But the Rockets won that game with excellent play from a guard corps that struggled most of the series and because they took care of the ball, committing a series-low nine turnovers against a pressing, physical defence.

Will all teams switch their emphasis to a slower style, filled with hand-checking and pushing in the paint, now that the Rockets and Knicks have shown it works?

Unlikely. It's hard to imagine Orlando with Shaquille O'Neal and Anfernee Hardaway or Golden State with Chris Webber and Latrell Sprewell going that way.

But when it comes to the finals, defence wins. Chicago beat Phoenix 99-98 to win the title in game 6 last year. In 1992, the Bulls held Portland below 100 points in four of the six games. In 1991, they gave up more than 100 just once in five games against the Los Angeles Lakers.

In this year's finals, no team scored more than 93 points. The Knicks got 91 in each of their three wins. The biggest margin of victory was nine points.

"I've been around basketball a long time," Houston coach Rudy Tomjanovich said. "I don't remember ever seeing a series that was so tight."

"You go back to those laker-Celtic days, there were blowouts, there were 15-point wins, and this thing was a nip-and-tuck deal that will drive you crazy."



Houston Rockets Otis Thorpe celebrates with the NBA championship trophy Wednesday after the final against the New York Knicks at the Summit in Houston, Texas. The Rockets won the championship with a 90-84 victory against the Knicks (AP photo)

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HUSSEIN
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TICKETED FOR SPEEDING

Neither vulnerable. South deals.
NORTH
♦ A Q 10 2
♠ 8
♥ Q 2
♦ J 10 4 3 2
WEST
♦ J 9 8 5
♠ K 7 4
♥ 10 9 5
♦ 8 2
EAST
♦ K
♠ Q J 10 3 2
♥ A 7 6
♦ A 7
SOUTH
♦ A 5
♠ A 5 4
♥ K J 4 3
♦ A K Q 5

The bidding: South West East
1 NT Pass 2 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass 3 NT Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Six of ♠
There is no posttime more boring than a game of bridge played at a pace which would make a snail look like a hot rod. However, that doesn't mean you shouldn't take time to plan your play. South, declarer at three no trump, had a case of "flying fingers" at trick one and paid the price.

No modern player thinks twice about opening one no trump on a balanced hand of 16-18 (or 15-17) points that contains a weak doubleton. North's two clubs checked for a

possible 4-4 spade fit. When South denied a four-card major, North made the value raise to the no-trump game.
West led a low spade and declarer seized the opportunity to finesse the ten. The operation was successful, but the patient died! The two lost to East's king and, since it was obvious a spade continuation was futile, the defender shifted to the queen of hearts and persevered with that suit when declarer ducked.

After the ace of hearts was forced out and declarer could count to no more than eight tricks without a trick in diamonds, East took the ace of diamonds at the first opportunity and cashed two more heart tricks for down two.

Had declarer taken a few moments' thought before playing to the first trick the futility of the spade finesse would have been apparent. Spades is not the danger suit — hearts poses a far graver threat.
To prevent the actual debacle, declarer should have risen with the ace of spades at trick one, then forced out the ace of diamonds. That would establish nine tricks for declarer and the defenders would have no way to collect more than two spades, regardless of how the suit was distributed.

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	JURASSIC PARK		Christian Slates in KUFFS		CONCORD '1' DENNIS		Soon the new play!!!		Today & Everyday Abu Awwad in social comedy "PUNCTURED BAG"		Present their play: WHAT A PEACE! (Salam Ya Salam)	
	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30						Daily at 8:30 p.m. The theatre is closed on Tues. days.	
					Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:15							

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraqi delegation off to France

BAGHDAD (R) — A delegation from Iraq's communications and transport ministry has gone to Paris to look at transport schemes that French firms could build in Iraq, the official Al Thawra newspaper said Friday. French businessmen were in Baghdad this week to discuss resuming their once lucrative trade with Iraq once the U.N. Security Council lifts an embargo. France was Iraq's major Western trade partner in the 1980s.

David Steel to retire as MP

LONDON (AFP) — Former Liberal leader Sir David Steel is to retire from Britain's House of Commons at the next general election after 30 years as a parliamentarian, he announced Thursday. "I entered the Commons at the age of 26 as the baby of the House. Now at 56, I harbour no ambitions to stay to become the father of the House," he told his Scottish Borders constituency party at Galashiels. One reason for his decision was to quit when he was young enough to contemplate "doing something equally constructive and challenging with the remaining decades of my working life," he said. Sir David was one of the most prominent "third party" parliamentarians over the past two decades. Liberal leader from 1976 to 1988 he was a leading figure in the historic merger of his party with the former Social Democrats in the early 1980s, and co-founded the Liberal Democrats. He is to relinquish his post as the Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesman at the end of this session of parliament.

Plea accord struck in Whitewater trial

LITTLE ROCK, Arkansas (AP) — The Whitewater prosecutor struck a plea bargain that will seal testimony by a man who claims that Governor Bill Clinton pressured him into making a loan to a Clinton business partner. The agreement came four days into a trial peripherally related to the Whitewater investigation of President Clinton and his real estate dealings. The case involves two men accused of conspiring to defraud the Federal Small Business Administration. A third man involved in the scheme, David Hale, was supposed to take the stand, but Whitewater Prosecutor Robert Fiske Jr. feared his testimony could jeopardise the Whitewater probe by tipping off people under investigation.

Japan emperor arrives in Hawaii

HONOLULU, Hawaii (R) — Emperor Akihito arrived in Honolulu Thursday, the last stop of his 16-day whirlwind tour of the United States. On Friday, Mr. Akihito and Empress Michiko were to lay a wreath at the National Cemetery of the Pacific at the Punchbowl overlooking Honolulu before attending mostly cultural events.

Israelis dynamite Lebanese fishing boats

SARAFAND, Lebanon (AFP) — Israeli commandos dynamited two fishing boats in a southern Lebanese port in a dawn attack on Friday, security sources said. Israeli frogmen swam into the tiny Sarafand port, 55 kilometres from Beirut, and attacked the boats belonging to Mohammad Abbas Atoui and Salim Ali Manana, they added. Three days earlier Israeli naval forces patrolling the Lebanese coastline picked up Mr. Atoui and Mr. Manana and questioned them about their boats, a security source told AFP. Seven months ago Mr. Atoui lost a boat in a similar Israeli attack.

Turkish troops leave to join U.N. in Bosnia

ANKARA (R) — Turkish infantry left Ankara on Friday to join U.N. forces in Bosnia for what their leaders said would be a mission to keep the peace and "end the massacre." "You are leaving to keep the peace and bring humanitarian aid to Bosnia, where a horror has been going on," President Suleyman Demirel said as nearly 300 blue-beretted troops prepared to board two Turkish Airlines planes at Ankara airport. The deployment of Turkish troops in Bosnia has angered Serb leaders, who say Turkey's history of conflict with Serbs during Ottoman rule in the Balkans has prejudiced it in favour of Bosnian Muslims and should bar it from peacekeeping in the area. Turkey's age-old rival Greece also opposes the deployment, saying it will raise Balkan tensions, and Bulgaria says it objects in principle to any military involvement by Balkan countries in the Bosnian conflict.

Forum stresses need for Palestinian development

PARIS — The current peace process represented an opportunity to build together a society based on mutual respect, self-interest, fairness and equity, Leila Shaheed, observer for Palestine to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) said Thursday, the three-day seminar on Palestinian Trade and Investment Needs concluded.

"Maybe we have not yet reached the full implementation of the peace process on the ground, but there is surely something new that has happened between Israelis and Palestinians," she said. "We can talk to each other in a way that has never been as free, as responsible politically and as challenging."

In a closing statement, Keba Birane Cisse (Senegal), seminar chairman, said that Palestinian economic and social development was essential for the achievement of a just and lasting peace. During the past few months, accords had been reached on building a Palestinian economy and integrating it into a regional and international context. Trade was of determining importance in that process.

For many, the past three days of productive and useful deliberations had represented a learning process, demonstrating the magnitude of the task now facing the Palestinians. The seminar had provided an opportunity to exchange views and offer fresh perspectives on the challenges that lay ahead, he said.

The seminar participants adopted the preliminary version of their final report, which summarises the views expressed during the past

three days. It was introduced by Joseph Cassar (Malta), rapporteur.

Round-up

During the seminar participants considered a wide range of issues in the building of a Palestinian economy, including challenges in creating a favourable economic environment, Palestinian bilateral economic relations and the role of international assistance.

Addressing the need to lay a foundation for economic development, they discussed the lifting of the current regulatory burden inhibiting development preparing a new Palestinian legal framework and building Palestinian public institutions and a public finance system. The need to promote private enterprise and to rehabilitate physical infrastructure and public utilities was also stressed.

Presentations were also made on Palestinian needs and policy options on investment for development and trade. Participants called for the promotion of domestic investment and for investing in infrastructure and human capital. They also considered future Palestinian trade relations, the opening of new international markets, the role of local chambers of commerce and efforts to promote export generation and import substitution.

The officers of the seminar were Keba Birane Cisse (Senegal), chairman; and Joseph Cassar (Malta), vice-chairman and rapporteur.

Hebron inquiry blames Israeli army

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — An official inquiry into the Hebron massacre has blamed the Israeli army for failing to protect Muslims at prayer, the daily Yediot Aharonot said Friday.

Jewish settler Baruch Goldstein killed more than 30 Palestinian worshippers when he opened fire in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron on Feb. 25, before being beaten to death by enraged crowd.

The inquiry set up immediately after the massacre said in a report the Israeli military command had failed to take account of the risk of a Jewish attack despite repeated warnings by the internal security services. Shin Bet, the paper said.

The inquiry's findings, due to be published Sunday, highlight the gaps in security at the site, and accuse the police of being lax in their attitude

towards extremist settlers.

The report does not recommend any sanctions, but calls for Jews and Muslims to be separated in the complex and says security measures should be changed following the massacre.

The 370-page report concludes that Goldstein acted alone and that all the victims died from gunshot wounds, the paper said.

Testimony by Palestinian witnesses and some Israeli army guards had suggested that there was a second gunman or that Goldstein had an accomplice in the bloodbath.

The five-member commission of three judges, a professor and a retired general is not seeking criminal indictments, but criticised senior army officers for ignoring intelligence warnings about possible violence by Jewish extremists against Palesti-

nians, the Yediot Aharonot and Haaretz newspapers said.

The commission also found that law enforcement against Jewish settlers in the occupied territories has been too lax, the dailies said.

In six weeks of hearings, the commission was told that soldiers were under orders not to open fire on settlers, even if they were shooting at others. Complaints by Muslim worshippers about settler provocations at the site, such as throwing acid on prayer carpets, were rarely followed up by police, witnesses said.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who also testified before the panel, shouldered some of the blame. As defence minister, Mr. Rabin is directly responsible for the occupied territories.

"I admit that I feel uncomfortable about the way the

law has been enforced regarding some of the settlers," Mr. Rabin said in remarks published Friday in Yediot Aharonot. "Steps that were taken were not sufficient, including by groups that I am in charge of... all the systems, including the ones that I head, didn't operate as they should have."

In other findings, the commission said soldiers did not fire on worshippers fleeing the massacre site and did not intentionally block the evacuation of wounded.

Palestinian witnesses have said army guards fired into the crowd of panicked worshippers to keep them at bay, and that soldiers also held up the rescue of wounded.

The supreme court rejected a last-minute appeal by Goldstein's widow, Miriam, to delay publication of the panel's findings until

her husband's death was also investigated.

The appeal was filed Thursday and rejected Friday morning, Israel Radio said.

The court refused her argument that the inquiry had termed her husband a murderer even though it had not established the circumstances of her husband's death.

She has maintained he could have acted "in self-defence."

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said in an interview with the daily Yediot published Friday that he was worried about the "complacent attitude towards the extreme right in the territories."

"Even the courts have not dealt harshly enough with them. We have to revise the whole legal system towards the Jews."

EU in loggerheads over executive

CORFU (AP) — Stepping up his drive for closer ties with the West, Boris Yeltsin on Friday signed a trade and cooperation agreement with the European Union that the Russian leader said would end the "economic cold war."

In a doric-columned chapel overlooking the Ionian Sea, Mr. Yeltsin promised the 12 EU leaders that Russia would be a "loyal, honest, reliable and trustworthy partner."

The EU-Russia accord will lift trade barriers to the sale of Russian goods in Europe, encourage Western investment in Russia's flagging economy and pave the way for negotiations in 1998 on whether to move towards a free trade agreement.

Mr. Yeltsin was the star at the opening session of a two-day summit overshadowed later in the day by a bitter fight over the selection of a new EU chief executive.

Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu, looking frail and unsteady as he

welcomed Mr. Yeltsin and other dignitaries, was under pressure to get the EU to agree on a successor to Jacques Delors, whose term expires in January.

Prime ministers Jean-Luc Debaene of Belgium and Ruud Lubbers of the Netherlands were the front-runners.

A failure to choose one would underscore the difficulty the group has in working together despite pledges of unity. Its new treaty on European Union calls for a common foreign policy and a single currency by 1999.

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who holds an important swing vote. He suggested at a press conference that the third official candidate, the EU's British trade commissioner, Leon Brittan, had dropped out of serious consideration as a compromise choice.

Germany and France are strongly supporting Mr. Debaene, an avowed proponent of deeper integration of EU countries.

'Israel is delaying Arafat'

(Continued from page 1)

Israel said Dr. Shaath had not coordinated a visit as should have been done.

Mr. Rabin, in an interview published in Israel's Yediot Aharonot, said Mr. Arafat had a right to worship in Jerusalem and only technical arrangements stood in the way of an Arafat visit.

Once Mr. Arafat arrives, Israel would weigh a request to visit Jerusalem, particularly to pray at holy sites such as Al Aqsa mosque, Mr. Rabin told Yediot Aharonot.

"Arafat as a Muslim is entitled as any Muslim, to visit Jerusalem. If he wants to pray that is his right. There will be a problem about timing and arrangements but in principle the answer is positive," Mr. Rabin said.

The Maariv daily carried similar remarks from a separate interview with Mr. Rabin.

Israelis kill Nablus boy

(Continued from page 1)

Palestinian troops came to blows Friday in the Gaza Strip while arguing over who should detain a Palestinian boy accused of throwing stones at the Israelis, Israel radio reported.

It was the first reported scuffle between Israeli and Palestinian law enforcement agents since Gaza came under self-rule May 18.

The army spokesman confirmed that Israeli troops and police were stoned by Arab youths in the northern Gaza Strip. It said a confrontation developed with Palestinian police who demanded the Israelis hand over an 11-year-old apprehended on suspicion of throwing stones.

Israel Radio said an argument broke out at the edge of the Beit Lahia village and that an Israeli soldier was injured when the two sides exchanged blows. In response, an Israeli soldier fired his gun into the air.

The army said that the Palestinian police took the boy away for questioning.

Awadalla Zaqoni, a Palestinian policeman, told the AP that the Israeli officer who caught the boy started beating him and that a Palestinian policeman snatched him by force from the officer, who shot about 10 bullets into the air.

The brawl reportedly ended after a joint Israeli-Palestinian patrol took all feuding parties aside for

questioning.

The Palestinian police let the boy go home, and the boy intends to file a complaint against the Israelis, Sergeant Zaqoni said.

Palestinian policeman Captain Najeh Ouhman of the team that tries to iron out difficulties between Israeli and Palestinian security forces denied that a Palestinian policeman struck an Israeli or that the detained youth was throwing stones.

He said the Israeli boy who ran away when he saw them come because he was selling beverages and cigarettes without a permit near Erez junction into Israel.

The May 4 agreement implementing autonomy in Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho left it up to Palestinian police to detain Arabs suspected of attacks on Israelis. But Israeli troops patrolling roads used by Jewish settlers are entitled to chase assailants.

The incident contrasted with the general cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian police since autonomy started.

On Thursday night Palestinian police in autonomous Jericho handed over four murder suspects hiding in the town to Israeli police.

The men were suspected of killing a woman in the Ramallah area, which is still under Israeli occupation.

U.N. biological team in Iraq

BAHRAIN (Agencies) — A 32-member team of U.N. inspectors flew to Baghdad Friday to plan long-term monitoring of Iraq's biological weapons programme to ensure that Iraq does not seek to revive it.

The multinational team, drawn from nine countries, was led by Jeff Mohr, an American. Its mission will last until July 8.

Roads Opsahl, Bahrain-based regional chief for the U.N. Special Commission charged with dismantling all Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, said the team will "survey a variety of sites to gather baseline data concerning microbiological capabilities."

"Some of the inspected sites may be included into the ongoing monitoring and verification," he added.

Iraq's clandestine biological weapons programme —

developing disease-spreading toxins and deadly micro-organisms — was primarily in the research stage when the United Nations moved to destroy Iraq's major military programmes after the 1991 Gulf war.

Iraq's nuclear, chemical and ballistic missile programmes were far more advanced.

The main biological weapons facility was a top-security complex at Salman Pak, southeast of Baghdad.

Western intelligence agencies said before the 1991 war that the Iraqis were developing strains of cholera, typhus and polio-virus aotbrax there.

There were also unconfirmed reports that Iraqi scientists, aided by foreign experts, were trying to develop malaria, commonly known as "rabbit fever," at Salman Pak.

The U.N. Special Commission overseeing the destruction of Iraqi weapons announced Wednesday that all of Iraq's chemical weapons have been destroyed.

The two-year operation, which involved some 100 experts from 23 countries, fulfilled the Security Council's orders to eliminate Iraq's declared chemical weapons stockpiles and did so "expeditiously, at minimal expense, and with no damage to the environment," according to a U.N. announcement.

Items destroyed included more than 480,000 liters of chemical warfare agents, more than 28,000 chemical munitions ranging from rockets to artillery shells to bombs and ballistic missile warheads, and extensive quantities of some 45 different precursor chemicals for the production of chemical warfare agents, it said.

Iran postpones visit to Iraq

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran postponed a visit to Iraq by a Foreign Ministry delegation in protest at Baghdad's support for an Iranian rebel group accused of a bloody bomb attack on a holy shrine, the ministry said Friday.

A ministry spokesman, quoted by Tehran Radio, said the visit on Saturday had been indefinitely postponed because of the "terrorist act by the (Mujahadeen) and in protest at the Iraqi government's support for the group."

The ministry said on Thursday it was decided to put off the visit for a second time after Monday's bomb blast at the shrine of Imam Reza in the northeastern city of Mashhad.

The authorities blamed the main armed opposition group, the Mujahadeen Khalq, for the attack which killed around 25 people and wounded at least 70, according to interior ministry figures.

The official agency IRNA said late Thursday 26 had been killed and about 170 wounded.

The Iraq-based Mujahadeen have strongly denied any involvement in the explosion.

The delegation was first due in Baghdad on June 11 to prepare for a visit by Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, but the trip was postponed at the last minute for unspecified reasons.

Mr. Velayati, who would be the first top official to visit Iraq since the 1991 Gulf war, said last week the delegation was to visit by the end of June.

The visit was to continue discussions on normalising ties five years after the end of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war. Talks resumed last October after they were broken in the wake of the Gulf war.

Tehran and Baghdad are sharply divided over a number of issues, including the fate of thousands of prisoners of war from both countries.

Iran's chief prosecutor said Friday authorities have

arrested two groups of Iraq-based rebels accused of planning "terrorist" attacks in Iran.

Ayatollah Abolfazl Mussavi Tabrizi, quoted by IRNA, said the suspects were members of the Mujahadeen, who "had been sent from Iraq with the aim to carry out sabotage activities."

He did not say how many people were arrested or if they were linked to Monday's bomb explosion in the shrine of Imam Reza.

Deputy interior minister Gholam Hussein Bolandian said Thursday 30 suspects had been arrested immediately after the incident, with many others rounded up later in other parts of the country.

The authorities have repeatedly blamed the Mujahadeen for cross-border attacks and bombing incidents inside the country, including Monday's explosion.

The rebel group has strongly denied any involvement in the bombing.

King: Jordan wants comprehensive peace

(Continued from page 1)

helping Jordan through its current difficult situation.

King Hussein said a joint Jordanian-U.S. committee has been formed to work out a mechanism for developing bilateral relations in all fields.

On the timing of the Jordanian-Israeli agreement, King Hussein said talks should have started right after signing the agenda in Washington but due to other events and other preoccupations and concerns for other parties in the region the talks were postponed.

However, he added, when time was opportune for commencing discussion of the agenda "we welcomed that and preferred to move the talks' venue to the area, particularly as talks will focus on such important issues as Jordan's sovereignty over its territory, demarcation of boundaries and the full recognition of Jordan's sovereignty, in addition to other issues of water and environment."

On Jordan's stand towards Arab issues, King Hussein said Jordan, since its creation, had been closer to the Palestine question — the question of the people, the land and rights.

"Probably this was our destiny as a family which has the honour of belonging to Jordan ever since the Great Arab Revolt," he said. In the

post-1967 era, King Hussein said, Jordan had stood by and supported its Arab brethren in affirmation of its Arab defence treaty and its membership in the Arab League under an Egyptian leadership.

At a late stage, the King said, "our Egyptian brethren opted to follow the path of peace and were the leaders in 1967. Later on, our Palestinian brothers decided to shoulder their responsibilities for securing their rights on their national soil. Given this, it was nonsense for Jordan to stay behind or keep waiting until all parties solve their problems."

"Jordan should exist, not only as an example for the political dimension but also as a model in its democratic approach, its respect for human rights, and political pluralism," he said. "It should remain as a strong rock in the region and all circumstances demand that it continue its search for a just, durable and honourable peace."

On Syria's reaction to the Jordanian-Israeli agreement, King Hussein expressed surprise at the question.

The King said he did not hear anything from Syrian President Hafez Al Assad at the personal level. "We are always in contact recently, and I have met with President Assad and discussed all our issues," the King said.

On Syrian-Jordanian coordination and Palestinian-Jordanian coordination, King Hussein said coordination in real terms was non-existent.

"What takes place from time to time and whenever circumstances allow is that we inform each other of the latest information on talks or provide each other with the latest developments," the King said.

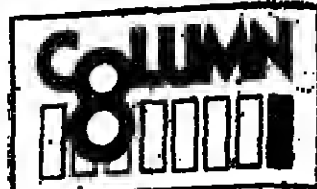
The King said that the interrelation between the Palestinian and the Jordanian questions has made it incumbent on Jordan to negotiate. "We, together with our Palestinian brothers, Syrians and Lebanese, started from the same point in Madrid. We are seeking a comprehensive solution. However, this does not mean that we have abandoned our right to address our own issues or that we assume that Syria should abandon its rights."

King Hussein said a Jordanian-Syrian meeting at the prime ministers level was planned to achieve some sort of integration in bilateral relations but the meeting was postponed at the request of Syria.

"We hope that the meeting will not be postponed for long," the King said.

The King said that Jordan had no problems with Syria and both countries remained in contact and had gone a long way together.

Jordan's relations were good with the Palestine Liberation Organisation, King Hussein said. He referred to the Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement which was followed by a Palestinian-Israeli agreement and stressed that there "is a need for a Jordanian-Palestinian-Israeli agreement to redress all issues."



Children sentenced for killing their father

MISSOULA, Mont. (AP) — A brother and sister were sent to mental health treatment centres for their part in the murder of their father, who was shot, hacked to pieces and burned in a wood stove, Sarah Butler, 15; her brother Timmy, 14; and their mother, Donna, all confessed to the Jan. 15 murder of Tim Butler at the family's ramshackle cabin, the mother is scheduled to be sentenced in August. The three said Mr. Butler psychologically abused them, and a psychologist said they feared he would kill them. Authorities said Sarah, a cheerleader and honour student, shot her father as he slept. Her mother stood beside her during the murder. Timmy admitted helping his mother dispose of the body, first by burning it, then by cutting it up with a meat saw and burning the remains in a wood stove, authorities said. District Judge John Henson placed both children in the State Department of Family Services' custody. He recommended that the two go to the separate treatment centre until their 21st birthdays. Because the children were charged as juveniles, the sentences represent the longest hold the state can place on them. Defence lawyers portrayed Mr. Butler as an emotionally abusive father and husband who had become reclusive and mentally unstable during the last six months of his life. During testimony Wednesday at a sentencing hearing, psychologist Sarah Baxter described the children as fearful of their father, although she never referred to any physical violence committed by him. On the day before the murder, Mrs. Butler met with a social worker and was told she and the children could move to a shelter, move in with friends or have Mr. Butler arrested for using marijuana. Mr. Baxter said Mrs. Butler was convinced her husband would pursue the family. "Their fear was that... Mr. Butler would track them down and kill them," Dr. Baxter testified.

Queen's yacht to go

LONDON (AP) — Queen Elizabeth II is giving up the sumptuous ocean-going royal yacht Britannia, and will reimburse the taxpayer for her family's personal use of royal aircraft, the government announced Thursday.

Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind said the 412-foot (125-metre) yacht Britannia will be decommissioned in 1997. He said any decision to replace the 40-year-old ship would be made in consultation with the queen. No decision has been made about what will become of the Britannia, but the queen hopes a useful purpose for it will be found in Britain, a Buckingham Palace spokesman said.

Last year one of the monarch's financial advisers, Michael Peat, said Britannia would not be replaced. With its crew of 277, the ship costs about £10.3 million (\$16 million) a year to operate, the Defence Ministry said. A £17 million (\$13.5 million) refit would have been required within three years to make the ocean-going yacht safe and seaworthy, and that would only have prolonged its life five more years, a ministry spokeswoman said.

The queen fully accepts the decision, and it was she who took the initiative to tell the prime minister that the pattern of royal visits had changed over the last 40 years and a royal yacht was no longer necessary, a palace spokesman said. The yacht is regularly used for official meetings and trade conferences, and reached its 1 million-mile mark during the queen's visit to Caribbean nations in February and March. Britannia had a prominent role in D-Day celebrations earlier this month, carrying the queen along the convoy route from England to Normandy. The queen's son, Prince Charles, with his bride Diana — and his appearance together on the ship the two made their first public appearance together on estrangement in December 1992.

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